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The JFK Assassination: Why Congress Should Reopen the Investigation

By Robert Blair Kaiser

I. A WARREN COMMISSION MEMBER CALLS TO REOPEN THE CASE

At long last, one of the members of the Warren Commission is willing to stand up and say he thinks the time has come to reopen an official inquiry into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The man is Burt W. Griffin, now a judge on the state trial bench in Cleveland, Ohio. "The case ought to be reopened," he says. "It's still an important public issue. It's not at all clear to me how to approach it. But the public is concerned and it's all tied in with everything that's been happening in our government for the past ten years."

What's been happening is a trend toward "Big Brother government and the implicit threat this represents to the freedom of the people," says Senator Frank Church, who heads a congressional committee about to plunge into an investigation of the entire U.S. intelligence community.

Judge Griffin's forthright stand—the first time any member of the Warren Commission has dared suggest the commission didn't get all the answers—should come as no surprise to the majority of Americans who, as early as 1966, according to a Gallup poll, did not accept the conclusions of the Warren Report: that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, assassinated President Kennedy and that nightclub owner Jack Ruby, acting alone, killed Oswald two days later in the Dallas police station.

And Judge Griffin's reasons for reopening the case should come as no surprise to longtime critics of the Warren Report. Says Judge Griffin: "I don't think some agencies were candid with us. I never thought the Dallas police were telling us the entire truth. Neither was the FBI. I wrote a memo in late August of 1964 to the director of the commission [J. Lee Rankin], in which I laid out a whole series of evidentiary questions. We only got answers on two or three of them."

Judge Griffin didn't keep copies of his own memos and the original of that memo isn't where it ought to be in the National Archives in Washington. But

one of the evidentiary questions Griffin recalls had to do with fingerprints other than Oswald's on the packing cases in a sixth-floor room of the Texas School Book Depository. After some delays, the FBI finally confessed to the commission that the other prints belonged to an FBI agent. "We accepted the answers we got," says Judge Griffin, "even though they were inadequate and didn't carry the battle any further. To do so, we'd have had to challenge the integrity of the FBI and the CIA. Back in 1964, that was something we didn't do."

Another staff lawyer on the Warren Commission confirmed Judge Griffin's view, if somewhat less courageously. Asked whether he got everything he wanted from the FBI, he paused for about 15 seconds and said, "Off the record?" Why would he want the obviously negative reply off the record? "Because of possible reprisals from the FBI," he said. "Though I'm worried about that less now than I was when Hoover was the director."

The informal testimony of Judge Griffin and his colleague confirms the findings of the independent critics of the Warren Commission.

These critics have dramatic new documentation which proves that the Warren Commission investigation was never the free and independent inquiry we'd been told; that the FBI concluded, too soon, there was no conspiracy and then in an effort to justify its early conclusions did a grudging reinvestigation whose only purpose was to prove its own premature conclusions.

The critics' most important piece of documentation: a longtime top secret transcript of an executive session of the Warren Commission on January 27th, 1964, which was declassified only last year (after a long and expensive Freedom of Information suit filed by Harold Weisberg). That transcript suggests the FBI and other intelligence agencies may possess significant information they withheld from the commission. The information may still be available in some agency's files or in the "OC" (official and confidential) files moved to J. Edgar Hoover's home at the time of his death in 1972.

Critics have been calling for a reopening of the JFK assassination case for years. Some of the calls have come from crackpots, others from solid analysts. Most of the calls, however, lacked focus and some of the questions had no reasonable hope of a solution.

But Judge Griffin's comments and the documentation of the critics help narrow the scope of any inquiry and make it possible for a congressional committee to ask questions that have answers. They can subpoena Dallas policemen as well as key figures like Marina Oswald; they can subpoena the files of U.S. intelligence agencies which were aware of Oswald long before November 22nd, 1963.

Peter Dale Scott, a Warren Commission critic who teaches English at the University of California at Berkeley, insists that abundant clues point to a conspiracy "demonstrable from the very procedures which it used to cover its traces" à la Watergate.

The time is right for reopening the case in another sense. The assassination seems to dominate the national subconscious. A majority, as polls show, have always had their doubts. Watergate, White House horrors and high-level coverup have only deepened doubts about America's ugliest murder mystery. Recent news stories only serve to intensify them.

A 1960 memo from J. Edgar Hoover to the State Department surfaced in 1975. It is a warning from the director that someone posing as Lee Harvey Oswald in Russia might try to get Oswald's U.S. passport. In itself, the memo may not be significant: Oswald's mother had complained to the FBI that she'd sent a birth certificate to Oswald in Switzerland and he'd never received it. But, linked to other reports that "a second Oswald" left traces in New Orleans, Miami, Dallas and Mexico City in 1963 and that some (even members of the Warren Commission) speculated that Oswald may have worked with the FBI as an undercover agent, the memo is a startling clue that Hoover and the FBI knew something about Oswald they

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE IN FULL

inated the president or at least been charged with assassinating the president and had been in the employ of the FBI and somebody had gone to the FBI they would have denied he was an agent."

"Oh, yes," says Dulles.

Russell says, "They would be the first to deny it. Your agents would have lone exactly the same thing."

"Exactly," says Dulles.

Well, then, where can the commission go to establish the facts? Boggs says they seem to have gotten themselves into a box. Someone suggests the commission go to the attorney general. Rankin says he doesn't see how Attorney General Robert Kennedy can come right out and ask Hoover what was happening.

McCloy wants the reasons for that spelled out. His outrage at the reversal of power inside the Justice Department warms the cold transcript: "Just why would it be embarrassing for the attorney general of the United States to inquire of one of his agencies whether or not this man who was alleged to have killed the president of the United States was an agent? Does the embarrassment supersede the importance of getting the best evidence in such a situation as this?"

Senator John Sherman Cooper says that for Bobby Kennedy to do so would imply that Bobby thought there was something wrong in the bureau. Even so, McCloy says, "It still wouldn't divert me from asking. It is an awkward affair. But as you said the other day, truth is our only client."

Boggs agrees and McCloy says, "I don't think we could recognize that any door is closed to us unless the president closes it to us." McCloy says he wants to get to the bottom of all this.

Dulles says McCloy may be asking the impossible. "How," asks Dulles, "do you disprove a fellow was not your agent?"

Boggs wonders whether Dulles, as head of the CIA, had had agents with no records.

"The record might not be on paper," says Dulles. "But on paper [we] would have hieroglyphics that only two people knew what they meant, and nobody outside of the agency would know and you could say this meant [one] agent and somebody else could say it meant another agent."

Boggs mentions the U-2 pilot, Francis Gary Powers. Dulles says Powers had a signed contract with the CIA. Boggs says, "Let's say Powers did not have a signed contract but he was recruited by someone in CIA. The man who recruited him would know, wouldn't he?"

"Yes," says Dulles, "but he wouldn't tell."

Justice Warren seems surprised. "We can't tell it under oath?" asks Warren.

Dulles says, "I wouldn't think he would tell it under oath, no."

"Why?" asks Warren.

Dulles has to give the commission a little lesson. "He ought not tell it under oath. Maybe not tell it to his own government but wouldn't tell it any other way."

McCloy says, "Wouldn't tell it to his own chief?"

Dulles says, "He might or he might not. If he was a bad one, he wouldn't."

Boggs may have thrown up his hands here. "What you do is you . . . make our problem utterly impossible because you say this rumor can't be dissipated under any circumstances."

Dulles says, "I don't think it can, unless you believe Mr. Hoover, and so forth and so on, which probably most of the people will."

Furthermore, Hoover may have had a reason to hire Oswald. "It is Mr. Hoover's job to watch the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and try to penetrate it in any way he could," says Dulles. But he doesn't believe the FBI did hire Oswald. "He was not the kind of fellow that Hoover would hire . . . He was so stupid."

McCloy says, "I wouldn't put much confidence in the intelligence of all the agents I have run into. I have run into some awfully stupid agents."

Dulles says, "Not *this* irresponsible." (Irresponsible is a strange description of an assassin of a president. If Oswald was a lone nut, then "irresponsible" is simply the wrong word. To whom would Oswald be responsible?).

McCloy counters, "Well, I can't say that I have run into a fellow comparable to Oswald but I have run into some very limited mentalities both in the CIA and the FBI."

The commission's meeting room rumbles with what the stenotypist describes as "laughter."

Warren tries to sum up: "Agencies do employ undercover men who are of terrible character."

The man who immediately agrees with Warren is the one man on the commission who should know. Says Dulles, "Terribly bad characters."

Rankin is impatient with all this. "Would it be acceptable to go to Mr. Hoover," says Rankin, "and tell him about the situation and that we would like to go ahead and find out what we could about these—"

"Well, Lee," interrupts Warren, "I wouldn't be in favor of going to any agency and saying, 'We would like to do this.' I think we ought to know what we are going to do and do it, and take our chances one way or the other. The most fair thing to do would be to try to

find out if this is fact or fiction."

Rankin is afraid of Hoover and says so. "What I was fearful of was the mere process will cause him to think . . . that we are really investigating him."

"If we are investigating him," says Warren, "we are investigating the rumor against him; we are investigating him, that is true."

The implication—that the commission may have to investigate Hoover—seems to bother Boggs. "Mr. Dulles," says Boggs, "when you headed up the CIA, the notion that you would know the countless informers and people employed by the agencies was fantastic. You couldn't know about all of that."

"No," replies Dulles. "But by this time I would have known whether we did hire him or not."

McCloy says, "You would know in this case who, if there was anybody, who would have hired Oswald, who it would be."

Dulles admits that he'd know what area to look in. "Someone," he concedes, "might have done it without authority. The CIA has no charter to hire anybody for this kind of work in the United States. It has abroad, that is the distinction. But the CIA has no charter. I don't say it couldn't possibly have done it but it has no charter of authority to run this kind of agent in the United States."

Was the CIA involved with Oswald? There is reason to believe that the CIA performed its own unpublicized investigation on Oswald after the assassination. Yet there's little on the record of what the CIA told the Warren Commission.

This is serious business and McCloy lodges the first open complaint about the situation: "I would think the time is almost overdue for us being as dependent as we are on FBI investigations, the time is almost overdue for us to have a better perspective of the FBI investigation than we now have."

Rankin takes part of the blame for that. He says that he and his staff need more time to study the FBI's supplemental report, given to them two weeks before. He says the supplemental report answered many of the commission's questions—but not all of them: "There are vast areas that are unanswered at the present time," says Rankin. And then he explains the trouble he is having with the FBI. "Part of our difficulty," he says, "is that they have no problem. They have decided that it is Oswald who committed the assassination, they have decided that no one else was involved, they have decided—"

Senator Russell interrupts. "They have tried the case and reached a verdict on every aspect."

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Kennedy's description of the president at that moment was deleted from her testimony as published by the Warren Commission, but her actual words, released by the Archives in 1972, may be significant here: "I was trying to hold his hair on. But from the front there was nothing. I suppose there must have been. But from the back you could see, you know, you were trying to hold his hair on and his skull on."

Groden, who reconstituted the Zapruder film from a pirated copy belonging to Time Inc., has had his film shown recently on scattered TV stations all over the U.S. and Canada. According to Groden, his blowup shows not only that President Kennedy was killed by a shot from the front (and therefore from a shot on or near the grassy knoll); it also shows the rifleman standing there on the grassy knoll holding the rifle up in the air as the presidential car disappears through the railroad underpass.

Interestingly enough, when Groden showed this film at Bernard Fensterwald's home in November 1973, neither he nor anyone else made any mention of a rifleman on the knoll. Groden says it wasn't until January 1974 that he started scanning the last 18 frames of his Zapruder film and then began to see that what he thought was the wheel well of the presidential Lincoln wasn't the wheel well at all, but the rifleman—"because the car was moving forward and the 'wheel well' was moving backward."

• David Lifton is an engineering-physics graduate of Cornell and a dropout from graduate school at UCLA who ought to have three doctorates by now in the disciplines he has picked up during ten years of work on the assassination: history, political science and historiography (a study of the way history is written). In 1967 Lifton did a 30,000-word analysis (with David Welsh) in *Ramparts* which argued that there were three assassins firing in Dealey Plaza on November 22nd, 1963.

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Lifton has a work in progress which challenges the authenticity of the evidence on which the Warren Commission based its major findings.

• George O'Toole, a former computer analyst for the CIA, has turned to a new technological tool as an important adjunct in his assassination research. The tool is something called a Psychological Stress Evaluator (PSE), a machine which a skilled operator can apply to anyone's recorded words and tell, by evaluating the stress patterns in the speech (seen on the machine's scanners as a series of mountains and valleys), whether that person is telling the truth or lying.

The PSE presents advantages over the old polygraph exam (which is why old-time polygraph examiners don't like it). A skilled PSE examiner can play the PSE game with remote subjects who don't even know they're participants. All O'Toole needed in order to find out whether some of the actors in the JFK assassination scenario were telling the truth was access to old taped interviews they'd given out years ago. O'Toole found some of these — radio and television interviews with officials like Dr. J.J. Humes, who performed an autopsy on President Kennedy, and members of the Warren Commission and, most notably, Lee Harvey Oswald's hallway interviews in the Dallas police station. Where previously taped interviews didn't exist (especially in the case of certain witnesses in Dallas and members of the Dallas police), O'Toole played the role of a journalist doing a tenth-anniversary story on the assassination, went down to Texas with a tape recorder and got his own interviews.

In O'Toole's just released book, *The Assassination Tapes*, he contends that many of the principals in this case (even Justice Warren) were not telling the truth when they said they'd found no evidence of a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

And, most startling of all, that Lee Harvey Oswald was telling the truth when he said, to a nameless reporter in the Dallas police station who asked him whether he had shot the president, "I didn't shoot anybody, no sir."

IV. LOBBYING FOR THE SUPPORT OF CONGRESS

If Oswald didn't do it, who did? There are a lot of conspiracy theories. A congressional task force is needed to evaluate them all. If the agencies themselves, the Secret Service, the FBI, the CIA, Army and Navy intelligence, are themselves an object of the investigation, then, quite obviously, we can't expect them (or anyone in the ranks of traditional law enforcement) to investigate themselves, or investigate anyone with old-boy ties to any part of the intelligence community.

And don't expect much from the Justice Department either. A group of Warren Commission critics, including Mary Ferrell of Dallas and Bernard Fensterwald, recently presented the U.S. Attorney's office in Dallas with evidence they'd gathered which they hoped would help reopen the case before federal courts in Dallas. Their project failed. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kenneth Mighell said he saw nothing new in the evidence they gave him.

The only likely forum is a congressional committee, which is being pushed by Representative Gonzalez—and you can expect no endorsing action by enough members of Congress unless and until public opinion keeps building.

Who will build it? There are various citizen lobbies at work. There's one active group in Washington D.C. under the leadership of Mark Lane and Marcus Raskin (who is director of the Institute for Policy Studies), an intelligent, liberal but unexciting group which has decided to talk quietly with individual congresspersons.

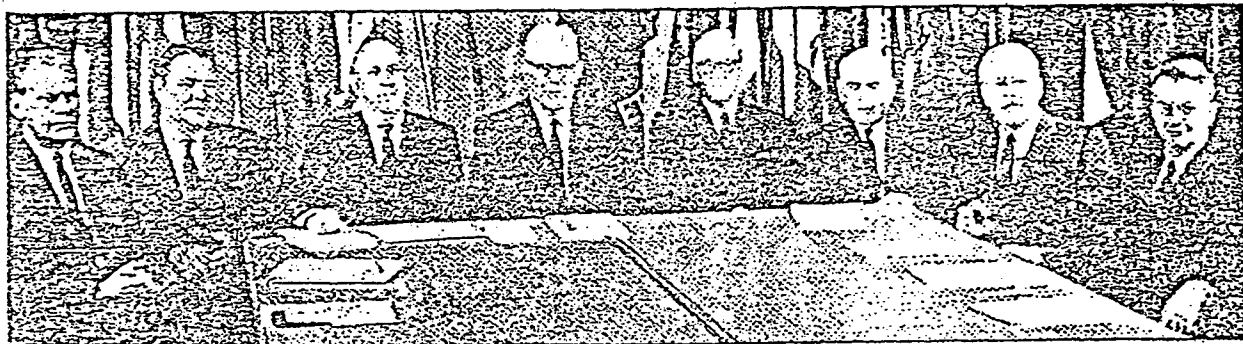
Then there's something else in Cambridge, Massachusetts, called the Assassination Information Bureau. The "bureau" consisted of five young men when I visited them last November. Their headquarters were in the home of Carl Oglesby on Arnold Circle in Cambridge. Oglesby, gaunt, articulate, a sometime instructor at MIT, is a former president of Students for a Democratic Society. He's 38 now, but his four associates in the AIB, Bob Katz, Mi-

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ment only wanted to deal with murders by lone psychotics. And the press, relying too much on "official truth," went along. Says Ben Bradlee: "Back in 1965, Russ Wiggins, the man I replaced here at the *Washington Post*, told me there'd never be an end to this story [on the JFK assassination]. He said, 'Unless you can find someone who wants to devote his life to it, forget it.'"

But perhaps that is exactly the kind of journalistic commitment which is needed. American newsrooms are full of men and women who have devoted their lives to the police beat. Watergate was a police story which took years to unfold; the assassination of John F. Kennedy is the biggest police story of them all. If it takes decades to tell it, then decades must be devoted to its telling.

In the assassination of President Kennedy, the major question today is: Did the FBI and the CIA (or any other governmental agency) withhold important information from the Warren Commission? It is a question the press must ask—over and over again—until the people have a credible answer.



Gerald Ford's Little White Lie

Classifying executive sessions of the Warren Commission meant little to one of the commission members, Representative Gerald Ford, who took the transcript of the January 27th meeting, blue-penciled all the parts of it that could have embarrassed anyone and used it as a basis for the first chapter of his book about Oswald, *Portrait of the Assassin*. Then he lied about it in his confirmation hearings for vice-president before the Senate Judiciary Committee on November 5th, 1973:

The chairman: Now, Mr. Ford, it has been stated that as a member of the

Warren Commission, you voluntarily accepted the constraints which all the members of the commission accepted, providing that you would not publish or release any proceedings of the commission.

You did, however, in association with another, publish a book and provide material for a 'Life' magazine article on the proceedings of the commission. Do you feel this was a violation of your agreement?

Mr. Ford: To my best recollection, Mr. Chairman, there was no such agreement, but even if there was, the

book that I published in conjunction with a member of my staff... we wrote the book, but we did not use in that book any material other than the material that was in the 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits that were subsequently made public and sold to the public generally.

The National Archives declassified the top-secret January 27th meeting seven months later, on June 12th, 1974.—eight years after Ford used the transcript in his own book.

—R.B.K.

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MARIANNE MEANS

Castro Had JFK Killed?

Former President Lyndon Johnson told me not long before he died that he believed Cuban Premier Fidel Castro was behind Lee Harvey Oswald's murder of President John Kennedy.

Johnson, then a retired private citizen, swore me to secrecy. But I break the confidence now because Johnson's opinion appears to debunk the current speculation that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) might somehow have been involved in the Kennedy assassination.

The former president said that he firmly believed Oswald was acting alone in pulling the trigger. But Johnson also believed that Oswald did such an outrageous deed because he was under either the influence or the orders of Castro.

Although I asked for more information, Johnson did not explain the basis for his conviction. He only said that he understood Castro wished to have Kennedy killed because he believed that Kennedy had ordered the CIA to kill him. And Johnson declined, with a shake of his head, to tell me if that suspicion of Castro's had been an accurate one, or even if Johnson himself knew whether it was.

Johnson was convinced that the Warren Commission report was accurate, insofar as it went. But he obviously doubted that the full truth had come out.

The former president confided these thoughts to me in a long, rambling conversation during a private visit to his ranch about a year before he died. He was in a reflective mood, and enjoyed reliving vicariously the days of his presidency. (I had been assigned to cover the White House during most of that period and had been in the White House motorcade in Dallas when Kennedy was killed.)

Johnson said he was disturbed by the periodic efforts of amateur sleuths to keep controversy over the assassination alive. "Some people even think I directed it," Johnson sighed. "It is a lucky thing I was there in the motorcade and could have gotten it too."

For the past month, the White House Commission investigating the CIA has been

looking into allegations that the agency was a party to the Kennedy assassination. The group, chaired by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, officially announced last week that it has been unable to find any evidence to support those allegations.

"Thus far we have not found any credible evidence that the CIA was involved as a party in the assassination," Commission Executive Director David Belin said.

The allegations were raised primarily by comedian Dick Gregory, who contended that E. Howard Hunt, a former CIA agent, convicted two years ago of conspiring to carry out the Watergate bugging plot, was present at the scene of the assassination. Hunt denied this in testimony before the commission and produced witnesses to the fact he was in Washington on the day Kennedy died.

The CIA, however, did have some knowledge of Oswald prior to the assassination, because he was an ex-Marine who had lived for some time in the Soviet Union and was therefore a security suspect. CIA operatives in Mexico were also supposedly aware of Oswald's movements there.

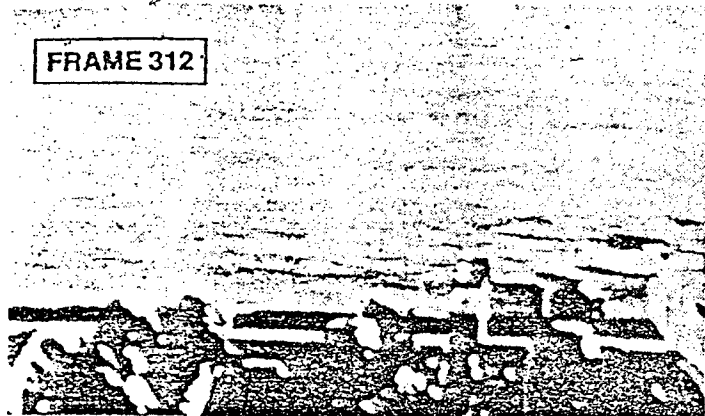
Two months before the assassination, Oswald appealed to the Cuban embassy in Mexico City for permission to visit that country. Thus there is established evidence that Oswald was at least interested in Cuba, if not under its influence.

During the period while he was trying to go to Cuba, Oswald might have been told by a Cuban activist that Kennedy intended to have Castro assassinated and in his own demented mind taken on the chore of killing Kennedy first. Or it is possible he was assigned the task by a Cuban official in return for some future reward.

Or it is possible that Oswald decided to kill Kennedy for no other reason than that he was nuts.

I do not know whether Johnson based his opinion about Castro on special intelligence he could not reveal, or simply on an experienced political hunch. In any case, the commission ought to find his views interesting.

FRAME 312



FRAME 313



The mystery of the mortal wound: Kennedy, still clutching at his throat wound, is hit with explosive force from behind . . .

Dallas: New Questions and Answers

They are a breed apart—an odd-lot assortment of skeptics and ideologues, rationalists and fantasists who have never believed that Lee Harvey Oswald alone killed John F. Kennedy and have invested up to a dozen years of their lives in trying to disprove it. They flowered first in the middle '60s, then fell into discouraged retreat with the collapse of former New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison's jerry-built attempt to prove their case in court. But the true disbelievers are back now, more numerous and insistent than ever, with their three-Oswald and four-assassin scenarios and their dizzying exegeses of every scrap of paper and every frame of film on the JFK shelves in the National Archives. And this time, in a nation still traumatized by the crimes and lies of Watergate, they have found their widest audience yet for their demand that the inquest be reopened.

Their doubts, reasonable or not, have inspired at least two dozen nonfiction books, four novels, three feature films, several national conferences and a recent freshet of articles in journals ranging from Penthouse to Rolling Stone. A bootleg copy of the famed Zapruder home movie of the assassination—blood, brain fragments and all—has played twice this spring on network TV and numberless times to smaller audiences around the nation. A group of Old New Leftists in Cambridge, Mass., embraced

the cause and booked 250 campus lectures (at \$780 each) in a single year. A Warren commission staff alumnus, who still believes that Oswald acted alone, has urged a review of the case—and now Texas's U.S. Rep. Henry Gonzalez has formally proposed that Congress undertake the rehearing.

The Warren verdict is indeed threaded through with unanswered questions and unresolved anomalies. What its detractors offer in its place is one or another alternative hypothesis far tidier than the commission's one-man, one-gun analysis. But their sort of tidiness has its own vices. Supposition is elevated into fact; accident becomes criminal design; evidence is accepted on faith if it fits a conspiracy theory and rejected as manufactured if it does not. The doubters, moreover, have never harmonized their own doubts about whether or not Oswald was involved at all, or how many assassins fired how many shots, or who might have put them up to it—the CIA, or the Mafia, or the Communists, or Texas oil, or some other party or parties unknown.

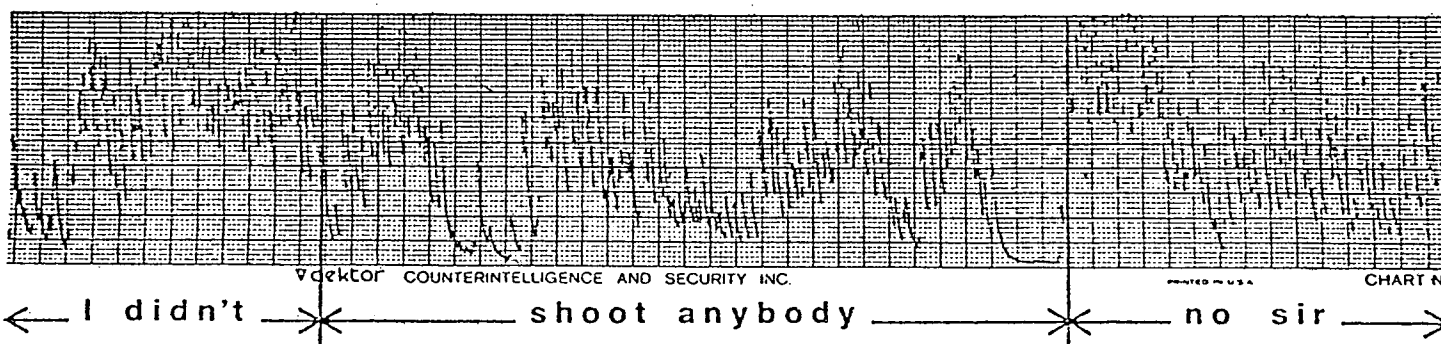
Still, amid the mélange of fact and guess, reason and imagination, there are provocative questions:

DID OSWALD DO IT?

The Voice Test: "I didn't shoot anybody, no sir," Oswald told an interviewer at Dallas police headquarters, and many

doubters have always chosen to believe him. Now they have been joined by a sometime CIA computer analyst, George O'Toole, who played a tape of Oswald's denial to a Psychological Stress Evaluator—a device that supposedly measures and charts tension in a person's voice—and found none of the bunched-up, hedge-shaped clusters of squiggles that commonly accompany lying. In Penthouse and in a newly published book, "The Assassination Tapes," O'Toole rendered his unambiguous judgment: "Quite clearly, Lee Harvey Oswald was telling the truth."

The Flaws: The PSE, while gradually gaining acceptance, remains controversial among experts in lie-detection; neither the FBI nor the CIA uses it, and Dr. Joseph Kubis, a Fordham psychologist who tested it extensively for the Army, came away doubting its validity. There remains, moreover, the powerful circumstantial case that Oswald was involved, alone or not. The only known murder weapon, a 1940 Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, was traced to him and bore his palmprint; the only recovered cartridges and bullet fragments were traced to the rifle; the revolver that killed Dallas police patrolman J.D. Tippit was in Oswald's possession when he was arrested in a movie theater 80 minutes after the assassination. Even some conspiracy theorists concede the case, and David



Oswald's voice chart: Did the absence of stress signs amid the squiggles prove his innocence of murdering JFK?

continued



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... but did a second hit from up front drive him violently backward?

Belin, a Warren staff alumnus now directing the Rockefeller commission inquiry into the CIA, says flatly: "I have no doubt that Oswald killed Kennedy."

WAS THERE A CONSPIRACY?

The Superbullet: The Warren commission's one-man theory rested heavily on the hypothesis that Oswald's first shot struck JFK in the upper back, exited from his throat, tore through then Texas Gov. John Connally's torso and right wrist, and burrowed into his left thigh. To have conceded that the two men were hit by separate shots would have been to acknowledge a second gun; Oswald almost certainly could not have fired his clumsy bolt-action rifle that quickly. Yet the single bullet said to have caused all this damage came away miraculously unscathed. And ongoing studies of the Zapruder film—most recently by Robert Groden, 29, a New York optics expert currently touring with a pirated print—seem to the doubters to show Kennedy and Connally reacting to their wounds a half-second to one and a half seconds apart. The conclusion: they must have been hit by separate guns.

The Flaws: The nearly pristine condition of what critics call Superbullet is indeed hard to explain; the commission's defenders are mostly reduced to arguing that it could have survived intact because it did. But the doubters are stuck with the perplexing question of what *did* become of the bullet that hit Kennedy if it didn't strike Connally as well. And the film is at best ambiguous on the timing of their wounds. To some viewers, Connally seems to go stiff almost simultaneously with Kennedy's first visible reaction, and his right hand flies upward clutching his Stetson—reflexes that might support a single-bullet theory. Connally's major reaction to his wounds does come a half second or so later, when he begins sagging rightward, spins and then slumps heavily to his left. The commission called this a delayed reaction, and subsequent studies by UCLA physicist B.K. Jones tend

to buttress its case. Jones found that Connally's reaction was too exaggerated to be explained by the impact of the bullet; he suggests that Connally was reacting physiologically to his wounds.

The Fatal Wound: With gut-wrenching clarity, Groden's blowups of the Zapruder film show JFK's head snapping forward under the impact of a bullet that blew away one side of his skull; then, a split-second later, his hand and body lurch even more violently up, back and leftward into Jackie's arms. The doubters' theory: that Kennedy was hit by separate shots, one from the rear and one from the front, a single movie frame (or one-eighteenth of a second) apart.

The Flaws: The film itself shows an explosion of blood, brain and bone fragments spraying upward and forward, suggesting a hit from the rear. A second bullet striking Kennedy from up front might have been expected to produce a comparable burst backward, but none is visible. Physicist Jones's studies, moreover, concluded that a double hit would have required a "giant" second bullet with ten times the momentum of the first to drive JFK back and leftward so forcefully. His hypothesis: the movement was a neuromuscular reaction to the damage to Kennedy's brain.

The Mystery Men: The conspiratorialists have long been fascinated by a frame in a second amateur film shot by Orville Nix;

it shows—or so they believe—a figure aiming what could be a rifle over the top of what could be a station wagon on the grassy knoll ahead of the President's motorcade. And Groden, in the best "Blowup" tradition, thinks he has found two and possibly three more assassins in the Zapruder film: one, rifle still in hand, dimly visible through some low-hanging tree branches along the motorcade route, the other—perhaps with backup man—behind a fence on the grassy knoll.

The Flaws: The Nix "assassin," if he exists, could as easily be sighting a camera as a gun; if it is a rifle, he appears to have the wrong arm propped on the car roof. Groden's "gunmen" are too gauzy even to be identified positively as human beings, let alone assassins, and are accordingly regarded as dubious even among some diehard conspiratorialists.

WAS OSWALD A GOVERNMENT AGENT?

The FBI-CIA Connection: The conspiracy literature is shot through with speculation that Oswald was an operative or at least an informer for one or both agencies, which were then heavily involved in trying to penetrate domestic radical groups. The CIA links are largely suppositious, based on some striking oddities in Oswald's record (the ease with which he got a Marine Corps discharge, then defected to Russia, then came home on a government loan) and some thready connections with various people and places thought to be in the CIA's ambit. The FBI story had rather more body: Oswald in fact was carrying the name and phone number of Dallas agent James Hosty in his pocket notebook, and there were rumors—now often quoted as fact—that he was on the bureau payroll as informant number S-179 at \$200 a month.

The Flaws: The CIA connection remains speculative, pending further inquiry by the Rockefeller commission and the two Congressional committees inquiring into the agency's operations. The FBI's Hosty insisted he had contacted Oswald only as a matter of routine surveillance of a returned defector. And the embellishments about his informant status and his payroll number apparently



Photo play: Some conspiracy theorists profess to recognize Watergate conspirators Sturgis and Hunt (above) among the three tramps in police custody near the scene of the Kennedy assassination

continued

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM CBS Morning News

STATION WTOP TV
CBS Network

DATE April 25, 1975 7:00 AM

CITY Washington, D.C.

NEW ROUND OF SPECULATION ON KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

By
Daniel Schorr

HUGHES RUDD: There's a new round of speculation here about the Central Intelligence Agency and the John Kennedy assassination. Not that the agency knew about that, but speculation that the CIA knew something about plots to assassinate Fidel Castro and that there may have been some Castro link to the Kennedy murder.

Vice President Rockefeller's CIA panel is investigating as Daniel Schorr reports.

DANIEL SCHORR: It begins to appear that in the Kennedy assassination as in the Watergate breakin, the CIA played its cause a little too close to its chest, hiding its knowledge of related matters for fear of being linked to the central events.

On Watergate, the agency discourages personnel from telling the FBI about the earlier help to Howard Hunt that the White House had requested; those wigs and the spy gear.

In the Kennedy assassination, the Rockefeller Commission is now hot after the CIA for information it withheld from the Warren Commission: Not about renewed theories of CIA involvement in the Dallas murder, which are not taken seriously, but about the CIA's role in plans to assassinate Fidel Castro. During the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, and also as late as 1963, just months before the Kennedy assassination.

There is new information that ransomed Bay of Pigs veterans were recruited anew by the CIA for missions to Cuba. And Mafia types were reportedly encouraged to send assassination teams to Havana.

Richard Bissell, the retired CIA deputy who managed Bay of Pigs, has been before the Rockefeller Panel this week. CIA sources say the agency didn't tell the Warren Commission about anti-Castro activities because they didn't seem relevant. But Rockefeller Commission sources say that these activities could shed a new light on the never-explained visit of Lee Oswald to the Cuban Embassy in

Jerald terHorst

Ford, Ted haunted by Dallas



WASHINGTON—President Ford and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy [D., Mass.] share a dilemma.

Present circumstances inhibit both men from advocating a new inquiry into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Yet both are keenly aware of and perturbed by the steadily increasing volume of data challenging the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman on that black day in Dallas in 1963.

Ted Kennedy's dilemma is the most agonizing.

As the brother of the slain President—and of the slain Robert Kennedy—Ted Kennedy inwardly recoils at the prospect of a reopened inquiry into one or both cases, the mass of publicity that would result, the need to relive those horrible episodes and the trauma that would be revisited upon the members of his family.

MOREOVER, a call for a new investigation would bring down on him hordes of those who honestly believe they have new information, plus even greater numbers of "kooks" and conspiratorial-minded fanatics who already besiege his mail and his Capitol Hill office.

Still others would term such a Kennedy call for an inquiry a political move, designed to whip up public sympathy for a Ted Kennedy campaign for the Presidency in 1976—an office he insists he is not seeking.

For obvious reasons, Kennedy could not favor a new probe into the death of one brother without favoring similar investigation of the other, particularly since both are now clouded with suspicions of other participants in the crimes.

My brothers are dead, he tells those who pressure him. No amount of fur-

ther investigating will bring them back to life. Please understand my position.

Ford's position is different but no less difficult. As a member of the Warren Commission, he is a signatory to the official report that Oswald acted alone. Of that seven-member bipartisan panel, only a few still live. For Ford to challenge their work is something he finds unseemly.

More important, Ford finds himself constrained by his office. Right or wrong, he feels intensely that a Presidential call for a new inquiry into the Dallas assassination would have implications and reverberations that go far beyond the merits of such action. Indeed, he suspects some persons would accuse him as well as Ted Kennedy of trying to capitalize politically on the mounting public interest in a second look at John Kennedy's death.

Yet, like Ted Kennedy, who lunched privately the other day with John McCone, the former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the President is deeply concerned about recent developments and detailed studies of the Zapruder film of the Dallas shooting which suggests that President Kennedy might have been the victim of a plot.

About a month ago, Ford checked out the wording of the Warren Commission's report and thus was prepared to answer the surprise question he received at his April 3 news conference in San Diego. The Warren panel, Ford said, found no evidence of a conspiracy, foreign or domestic.

Yet, as every law student knows, the absence of evidence does not mean a conspiracy didn't exist but only that it hadn't been proved to exist.

The President said he would have the Rockefeller Commission look into allegations of CIA linkage to the Kennedy slaying in Dallas. Unfortunately that is not likely to lay the matter to rest

because the executive director of the Rockefeller Commission on CIA misconduct happens to be David W. Belin, who was an assistant counsel on the Warren Commission and is a stout believer in the single-assassin theory.

Fresh suspicion in the public's mind—disconcerting to both Ford and Ted Kennedy—was whetted this week by the statement of Richard Bissell, head of the CIA's "dirty tricks" division during John Kennedy's administration, that high-ranking intelligence officials discussed plans to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro. Bissell said the idea was vetoed by then CIA Director Allen Dulles, who McCone succeeded in November, 1961.

THE IMPORTANCE of Bissell's testimony is that it adds credence to a theory of some Warren Commission critics who believe that anti-Castro Cubans were out to get even with John Kennedy because his Bay of Pigs adventure failed to liberate Cuba.

Since it's clear that demands for a new inquiry into John Kennedy's death are mounting, not diminishing, it may be time for Congress to reopen the case. Rep. Henry B. Gonzales [D., Tex.] has such a resolution pending before the House Rules Committee. But it's not likely to get far.

There are many other ways to devise a responsible group to check into the Kennedy assassination. Indeed, to be credible, the membership of such an investigatory body should be as far removed from politics as possible.

Doing that would not be easy, but it would be the only kind of panel likely to overcome the dilemma of Ted Kennedy and President Ford while, most important, answering the question of a coverup or a conspiracy regarding the tragedy of Nov. 22, 1963.

Universal Press Syndicate

New information on President Kennedy's assassination

Recent information throwing new light on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and Lee Harvey Oswald's contact with a Soviet KGB Department V (Assassination & Sabotage) official shortly before Kennedy's death has been received by several Western intelligence agencies. This information has been deliberately withheld from the public so as not to interfere with the Kissinger policy of détente and other efforts to improve relations with Russia.

The source of the new information is KGB Department V defector, Oleg Adolfovich Lyalin, who disclosed this knowledge during lengthy interrogation by British Intelligence, which resulted in the immediate expulsion of 105 Soviet agents from England. The significance of Lyalin's disclosures connecting Lee Harvey Oswald with KGB Department V was not realised until much later when his secret data was analysed and then integrated with existing intelligence on the Kennedy assassination.

KGB Department V

KGB Department V is the ultra-secret section of Soviet Intelligence which has the prime responsibility for assassinations and sabotage. It is in existence now, and was in existence during the period of the Kennedy assassination. Despite consistent Russian denials, select assassination has been a covert policy of the Soviet Union since its conception. Upon the defection of Lyalin, KGB Chairman, Yuri Andropov, recalled all KGB Department V officers from overseas posts in justified fear that their identities and operations would be compromised.

One of the first KGB Department V officers to be personally recalled from his post was Valeriy Vladimirovich Kostikov, who was serving under cover as the second secretary of the Soviet embassy in Mexico City. Colonel Jorge Obregon Lima, chief of the secret police in Mexico City, knew of some clandestine activities by Kostikov and linked the Soviet embassy with the urban guerrilla movement in Mexico, which was attempting to upset social reform programmes being carried out under President Luis Echeverria. The CIA knew that Kostikov was a KGB official but did not know he was linked with Department V until after his recall to Moscow. Kostikov also maintained KGB liaison with covert Cuban GDI (General Directorate of Intelligence) operations in Mexico and the United States. Castro agents have specialised in various terrorist activities in those countries. It is also reported that Kostikov supervised the direction of two KGB external echelon-type espionage networks operating from within Mexico near the American border, which sent agents into the US and received intelligence data collected in America.

Kostikov and Oswald

On 27 September 1963, approximately eight weeks before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald contacted KGB official, Valeriy Vladimirovich Kostikov, at the Soviet embassy in Mexico City under the pretext of obtaining a visa. During the same trip, he contacted Cuban GDI officials at the Cuban embassy. He returned to Dallas on 3 October 1963. Oswald, an admitted Communist active with the Castro "Fair Play for Cuba Committee", assassinated President Kennedy on 22 November 1963, and seriously wounded Texas Governor John B. Connally, Jr. Earlier, on 10 April 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald attempted to assassinate retired US Army Major General Edwin A. Walker who was noted for his anti-Communist convictions.

Immediately following the assassination, and prior to the capture of Oswald, pro-Soviet officials in the US State Department and the "Voice of America" radio station placed the blame on "right wing extremists" in Dallas, allegedly under the influence of General Walker. Although this ploy collapsed with Oswald's apprehension, the Communist element in the United States and abroad has continually attempted to disown Oswald and shift the assassination blame to the American right wing, particularly the CIA (which, of course, cannot be considered "right wing" except by the Marxist element).

Soviet deception

The Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, turned over to US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, on 30 November 1963, a sheaf of documents from the USSR's consular files on Oswald. The papers pertained to Oswald's prolonged stay in Russia and his "attempts to get visas to go there again". Dobrynin's documents mentioned Kostikov but failed to link him with the KGB. They also failed to link Oswald's full contacts with the KGB and MVD while a resident of Minsk, Russia. Following the assassination, Kostikov remained at his KGB post in Mexico City, since his removal might hint at possible guilt of KGB or GDI conspiracy. Kostikov is a heavy drinker and was arrested by Mexican police in December 1968, after he threatened to shoot two Mexican PEMEX (Petroleos Mexicanos) engineers while drunk. The CIA had earlier warned the FBI of Oswald's contact with Kostikov in Mexico City, but it did not then know of Kostikov's assignment in Department V. Had that fact been known at the time, John F. Kennedy might be alive today.

Following the assassination, US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, "exonerated" Moscow from having anything to do with Kennedy's assassination. This was partially based on Ambassador Dobrynin's "cooperation" which was described as "unprecedented". To further its deception regarding Oswald's connection with the KGB, and to help the cover-up operations of its friends in America, Moscow arranged for the "defection" of KGB Major Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko to the United States through Switzerland in 1964. KGB "defector", Nosenko, carried a false story clearing the KGB of any conspiratorial contacts with Oswald. In his lengthy "revelations", all of which were already known to Western intelligence, Nosenko failed to report that Kostikov was a KGB Department V officer—a fact which he did not know. Nosenko claimed to be a defector of KGB Department VII (American section), which handled Oswald's examination in 1959. The "information" supplied by Nosenko confirmed that supplied to Dean Rusk by Dobrynin. Nosenko went into great detail on how the KGB was "horrified" at Kennedy's assassination. Nosenko also spread "information" on other genuine defectors from Soviet-controlled intelligence and security agencies. Moscow timed Nosenko's "defection" to fit in with the investigations of the Warren Commission, whose report was issued to President Johnson on 24 September 1964.

Oswald in Minsk

Oswald's full contacts with the KGB have yet to be disclosed. It is known that Moscow and the KGB are desperately attempting to disavow all connections between Oswald and KGB Department V, especially in light of the revelations of Oleg Lyalin, who provided data on the direct link between Oswald and the KGB assassination arm. It is believed that the

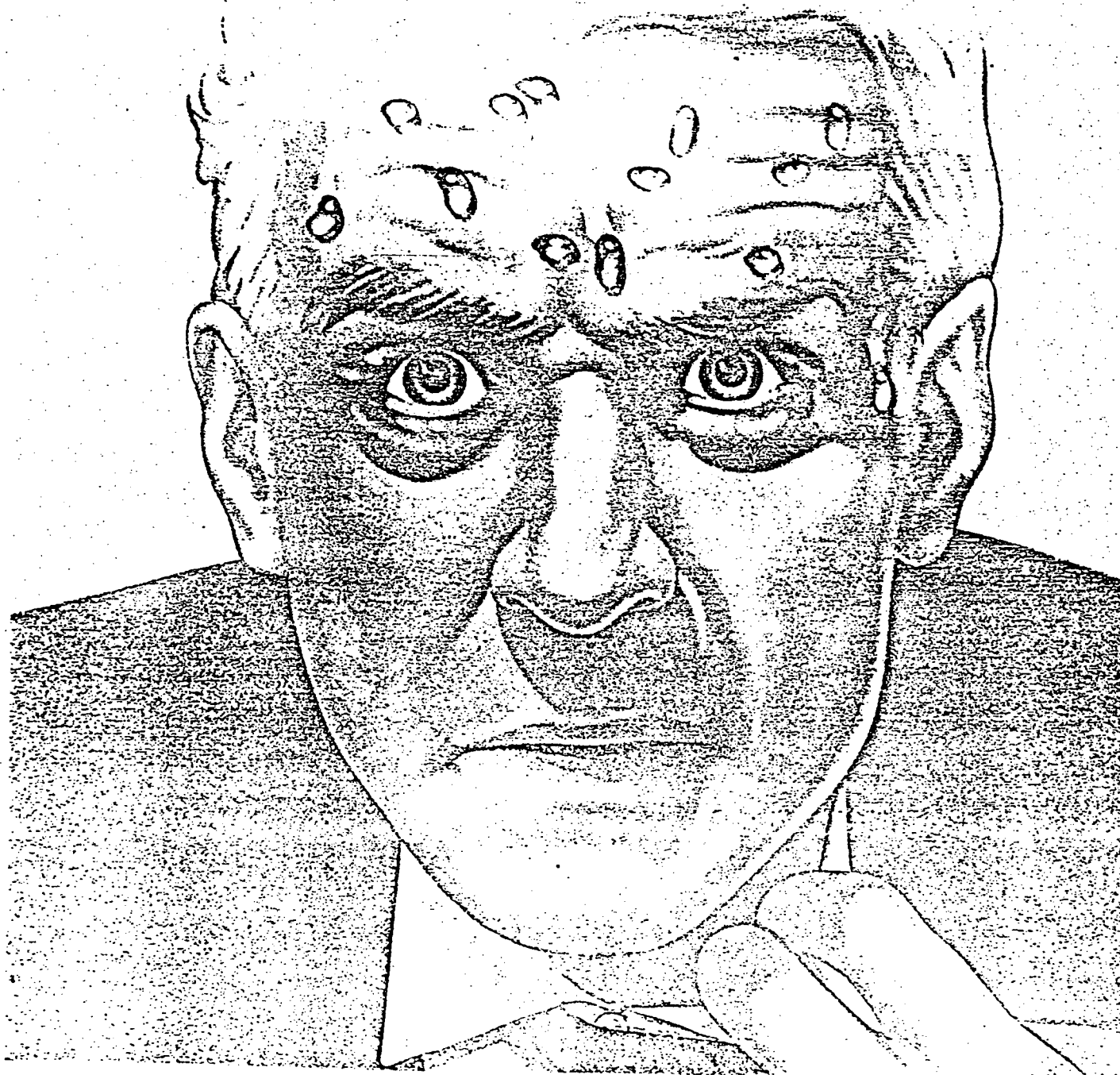
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MAY 1975

In the old days, it was paranoid—or “unreasonably fearful”—to believe that the narcs were about to batter down your door; that the CIA was illegally tapping your phone; that you’d be mugged the minute you stepped outside. Today, unreasonable fears have become not only reasonable but plausible, even real. In the spirit of making the crazy sane, and the sane crazy, we offer on the following pages our’s definition of

THE NEW IMPROVED PARANOIA

001
MAY 1975



washed across the nation and affected the man in the street as never before. People could not escape strife and controversy, not even in the smallest backwater burghs, because television brought Lee Harvey Oswald, Charles Manson and the Viet Cong into the living room each evening at six o'clock.

A breakdown in the Official Reality Department had spawned all sorts of itchy problems. You couldn't believe the Government, you couldn't believe the media, you couldn't believe your best friend—who, it often turned out, was working for the Government. Even the Pope suffered a credibility gap. The hell of it was, you had damned good reasons by the end of the Sixties not to believe *anyone* anymore.

An intolerable situation! It sent people scrambling for cults, gurus, ethnic revivalisms, McGovern, CREEP, *The Washington Post*, bisexuality—anything at all resembling a belief system by which one could tell the good guys from the bad guys. Left wing, right wing, liberal, radical, conservative—it didn't matter; you could jump from one to another, like Rennie Davis, like Tim Leary. The only important thing was to have a system to explain why the world was screwed up and who was to blame for it—the result being that everybody had a different explanation and a different enemies list.

Thus the kaleidoscopic array of fears facing us today. They are not simple fears, like those of our forefathers; they are vague and complex. Often, you can't exactly put your finger on it, but you *know* that evil forces are manipulating you, perhaps via marketing research, when you buy a useless product merely because its bright-red package stimulates your medulla oblongata. It's a feeling best summed up by Woody Allen when he said, "Paranooids have *real* enemies, too."

Which is why the word fear is out the window these days. The unthinkable has become real: irrational fears have become rational. You say, for instance, "I'm paranoid about Larry; I think he's a narc." Now, Larry may *not* be a narc, and in that case, since you have smoked grass with him for three years, your fear of him is irrational, maybe even disgraceful (since he's always laid so much free stuff on you). By using the word paranoid, you acknowledge that possibility. But at the same time, saying that you're paranoid is an acknowledgment that while *you* might be off your rocker, so is the whole world, and, *damn it*, you would not be a bit surprised if one day old Larry whipped out a badge and busted you!

Webster's, take note: If things stay bad, a new definition may have to be added to the dictionaries. But for the time being, we shall distinguish between the word's present dictionary meaning and its popular connotations by referring to the latter as the New Improved Paranoia. It's basically the old fear but with some new ingredients added, bright new packaging and an unprecedented number of sponsors.

A few illustrations:

Recently, *CBS News* commentator Eric Sevareid was commenting on a speech by President Ford. Ford had just announced that he was opposed to wage and price controls and was absolutely not going to impose them. Sevareid squinted into the camera and speculated that the true meaning of Ford's speech was that wage and price controls were due any day and that Ford was really signaling the business community to hurry and jack up their prices before he put the freeze on them.

In other words, suggests Sevareid, the President uses a sort of secret language with veiled messages to special listeners. There are people confined to rooms with padded walls who maintain nothing more than that. But what Sevareid says is more akin to the political maxim developed by journalists during the Watergate years: Whenever a politician announces that he's not going to resign, it means that the guy's already got his desk cleaned and his bags packed. This bit of newspeak is actually a symptom of the New Improved Paranoia. Sevareid,

other journalists and, indeed, all of us respond in this suspicious and distrustful manner because of our many experiences with political double talk. We may be paranoid in the new sense of the word, but we're not crazy.

Speaking of Eric Sevareid, by the way, isn't it peculiar that you never see his legs? The camera is always focused on the top of him, so you begin to wonder: What about Eric Sevareid's legs? What is CBS trying to hide?

Actually, the New Improved Paranoia is a calm, well-reasoned state of mind, closer, perhaps, to apprehensiveness than to either old-fashioned, jitterbugging paranoia or outright, pissing-in-the-pants fear. It is, in fact, the entire purpose of the New Improved Paranoia to eliminate the terror of doubt, to replace chaos with order and to provide a sort of psychic seat belt in the face of continual world crack-ups. The meat shortage, stagflation, Agnew's resignation, Kohoutek, the Russian wheat deal, the energy crisis—all these bewildering catastrophes were made bearable by the New Improved Paranoia.

Consider the energy crisis of the winter of 1974. A parade of oil-company spokesmen appeared before TV cameras, swearing that the shortages were genuine, yet it was universally assumed that the whole thing was a wicked ruse. Not one housewife or commuter waiting in those endless gas lines swallowed the official explanations. Instead, with the aid of the New Improved Paranoia,

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that listed all the instances in which Dylan used certain key words. Weberman figured out that when Dylan used the word rain, he actually meant violence, as in *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*, and so on. Naturally enough, Weberman's next step was to discover that such symbolic messages were embedded in the songs of other musicians, too. Pretty soon, he had formulated what he called the "Secret Language of Rock," which, like Seavareid's "Secret Language of Presidents," was used to send messages to the initiated.

Now, I would judge Weberman's theories reasonable, if not believable, up to this point. It is true that songwriters

do use symbolism, the best example being Don McLean's parable of the Sixties, *American Pie*. Once in a while, performers do send veiled messages to each other, as in Carly Simon's *You're So Vain*, addressed to Warren Beatty. Using a concordance to analyze a writer's work is a valid scholarly technique that has been applied to Shakespeare, Chaucer and Milton.

But when Weberman began to claim that certain songs contained secret messages directed at him, that's when the situation became problematic. One could argue with Weberman over whether or not a song said this or that. But to tell him, "No, man, *Watching*

the River Flow is not Dylan's way of warning you to leave his garbage alone," was kind of tough. It would have blown his whole cosmology, like telling Ptolemy the earth was not the center of the universe.

But then again, who's to say? It is a fact, sworn to by witnesses, that one day, on Bleeker Street, after yet another garbage raid, Weberman was walking home when suddenly an enraged Bob Dylan rode up on a ten-speed bicycle and delivered a hail of blows to his head. "The pump don't work 'cause the vandals stole the handles," as Dylan once said, which means that the New Improved Paranoia makes sense, even when it shouldn't.

Not only is the New Improved Paranoia sensible; it's *chic*, too. Remember how socially important it was to be on Nixon's enemies list? It's also considered very statusy to have had a tax audit. And is there anyone gauche enough to say that his telephone *isn't* tapped? You'll be the envy of all your friends if men in a black Plymouth actually do stake out your house every day. It is very *au courant* to live just west of the San Andreas Fault—and to complain about it. The ultimate is to be an ex-CIA agent, for as anybody conversant with the New Improved Paranoia knows, there is no such thing as an ex-CIA agent.

Perhaps, after all, you are thinking that this stuff about the New Improved Paranoia is a lot of bunk. Perhaps you imagine that you are immune to it, that you are a sane, rational human being not given to delusions either of grandeur or of persecution. Well, then, ask yourself one question: Do you jiggle the coin-return slot in pay phones after every call you make? You *do*, don't you? And do you know why you do it? You do it because you think that the entire telephone company's mammoth technology is going to disrupt itself just for you and return your ten cents. Or else you imagine that out of the 10,000 people who use that particular phone, one of them left a dime there for *your* benefit, and you fancy that you are the only person in the entire world who jiggles coin-return slots. Now, if that's not paranoid behavior with delusions of grandeur, I don't know what is. And it is not very far from believing that the telephone company is *for* you to believing that the telephone company is *against* you, is it?

But that's no reason to stop checking those coin-return slots. Because you know and I know that sometimes—not often, but sometimes—the dime is there.

And that's what the New Improved Paranoia is all about.

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OUT
MAY 1975

OPERATION RED ROSE

A SHORT STORY
BY PIERRE SALINGER

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE ROSCOE TANNER TO KICK AROUND ANYMORE

The black limousine turned off the Key Bridge onto the George Washington Memorial Parkway. It was a late summer day in Washington, D.C.—sunny, hot, humid—but in the back seat of the car, Charles Lewis, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, felt a little chill. "Rock" Lewis, as all his friends called him, glanced up from the papers he was studying and looked over at the Potomac River. Then he flicked the switch that turned off the air conditioning and went back to his reading.

The car turned off the parkway onto Route 123 and started in the direction of Langley. Virginia. Lewis put the documents back into his briefcase, pushed a button and spoke to the driver through the double window that separated them. "When we get there, drop me off and go have your lunch. I won't be leaving the office until late. Very late. The

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now living in Chile. And then he was decided. This morning, unbeknown to anyone else on the White House staff, he had summoned Rock Lewis to his office. And that is why, at this very moment, Lewis was poring over the plans of Operation Red Rose in his office at the CIA.

The more Lewis read, the more he realized the seriousness of what Buchanan had proposed to him. It could not be said that Lewis was a man of much scruple: Killing people had not deterred him in the past. Still, the thought of personally ordering the assassination of the President of the United States was staggering.

He had read enough of the dossier to reject the Plan proper. In his opinion, whoever had drawn it up had failed to come up with an organizational structure that could not be traced back to the CIA. That was too much of a risk. But the Alternate Plan intrigued him and, gradually, he became convinced that it was workable. Finally, he made up his mind.

He picked up his scrambler telephone and dialed the number of a similar instrument on the desk of General Buchanan. "I just want to check back with you," Lewis said. "I want to make sure that you have thought this thing out completely and that in your mind, it is the only plausible solution."

"There's no other way, Rock," Buchanan replied. "No other way at all. And the quicker we hit him the better. That man with his finger on the nuclear button is a living danger to all of us. And it doesn't matter now whether he's guilty or not. The situation has reached the point where we've got to do something—and fast."

"OK, Wiley," Lewis said. "But just remember that when I put down this phone, there's no turning back. Red Rose will be operational in a half hour. From there to Action Day should be less than seventy-two hours."

"I understand," the general said. "Start the operation."

Lewis heard the phone click at the other end of the line, then he summoned Wolfe. "Call Mikhaylov at the Soviet Embassy and tell him I've got to see him right away."

Wolfe shot his boss a look of disbelief.

"Right now!" Lewis snapped, and Wolfe hurried out.

Night was beginning to fall when Ivan Mikhaylov, the K.G.B. chief of station in Washington, drove up to the guard gate of the CIA building in Langley. He showed a card identifying himself as first secretary of the Soviet

Embassy, and his white Mustang convertible was quickly passed through.

For Mikhaylov, the events of the past hour had been slightly bewildering. To get a call from the CIA—the agency he had spent his life combating—was extraordinary enough, but to be invited to a meeting with Charles Lewis, its director, was even stranger. Mikhaylov had been involved in many delicate operations in his long career with the Soviet espionage forces. But this request was so peculiar that he had no way of knowing what to expect. Several thoughts rushed through his mind. Maybe, for example, one of his agents had been picked up. But he quickly dismissed that idea. Arrests for spying were usually taken up directly with the ambassador.

Wolfe was waiting for Mikhaylov in the lobby and quickly took him past the guards to the director's private elevator. A minute later, he and Lewis were alone.

Lewis tried to put his guest at ease. "There is no problem, Mr. Mikhaylov," he said with a smile. "It's just that we want you to arrange a service for us."

"I've never heard of the K.G.B.'s working for the CIA before," Mikhaylov said.

"Oh, that's not true. Every once in a while, we do each other little favors." Lewis was not smiling now. "There are some things you can do so much better than we can. And, of course," he added, "there are things that we can do better than you can."

"All right, Mr. Lewis, what is it you want?"

"Mr. Mikhaylov, I would like you to make contact with your superiors and have them put into effect the Alternate Plan of Operation Red Rose that they have had in their files since 1974."

"And just what is that plan all about, Mr. Lewis?" the Soviet agent asked.

"We would like you to assassinate our President."

It was the next day and the President was alone, as usual, in his office when Buchanan buzzed to see him. The President had seen no one else for the past several weeks, but he made it a point to talk to Buchanan at least once a day. He buzzed back, and in a few moments, Buchanan was standing before him.

"Mr. President, how are you feeling today?"

"Not very well, Wiley. Didn't get much sleep last night. But you didn't come in here to ask me about my health. What's up?"

Tanner spoke rapidly and his voice sounded shaky.

Buchanan had seen him like that for several months now and it only

forced his privately held views about the instability of the man. "Well, there are two or three things, Mr. President," he said without emotion. "First, your lawyers would like to see you. They need about two hours of your time to prepare your defense before the House of Representatives."

The President cut him off. "The hell with them!" he shouted. "They can prepare my defense without me. Besides which, what the hell difference does it make? You know as well as they do that those bastards have framed me in such a way that I can't escape."

"If you really feel that way, maybe you ought to resign, like Nixon did," the general said.

"Fat lot of good that did him. I've told you a hundred times, Wiley, I'm not going to resign. And, unlike Nixon, I mean it and I won't change my mind."

"Well, I have to be honest with you, Mr. President: If you don't resign, you're going to be impeached, and we can't promise you twenty votes in the Senate."

"I know all that," Tanner said with irritation. "Let's get off the subject. What else do you want?"

"Well, the Secretary of Defense wants to see you. You know, we're still involved in those SALT talks with the Soviet Union and he needs some guidance from you on how to proceed."

"And what more?"

"Well, just about an hour ago, the Soviet Embassy called and said that it was urgent for their ambassador to see you. He has a message from Chairman Ivanov that he says must be handed to you before the day is over." On his note pad, Buchanan checked off the items of business.

"I'll see the ambassador at four o'clock," Tanner said.

Buchanan looked up in surprise. Why, he wondered, was the President willing to come out of isolation for the Soviet ambassador? He kept his thoughts to himself. "OK, I'll set that up," he said tonelessly. "And what about the Secretary of Defense?"

"He can wait. Maybe I'll see him tomorrow. That's all, Wiley."

Buchanan knew there was no use in arguing with the President. He quickly strode out of the office.

Mikhail Stepanov, the Soviet ambassador, had been in Washington even longer than his predecessor, Anatoliy Dobrynin. For 17 years, he had tended to the U.S.S.R.'s business there and he had thought he was past surprises. Yet the events of this day had amazed him.

Early in the morning, he had been awakened

continued

"When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."
— Sherlock Holmes

The greatest cover-up of all

By Robert Sam Anson

It was one of those coincidences.

No one could have known that the bus would be stopping in front of Jacqueline Kennedy's apartment at precisely the moment she would be walking through the front door on her way to yet another funeral, but there, bizarrely, macabrely, it was: the bus with the big ad spread across its side, announcing in two-foot-high letters that "Lee Harvey Oswald Was Innocent." For a moment, there was an embarrassed silence. All that indicated recognition was a slight widening of the eyes and an almost imperceptible tightening of the muscles of her face. And then she was gone, disappearing in her limousine.

Even now, 11 and a half years since that sunny day in Dallas, it is the murder no one will ever forget. Two presidents have come and gone, a war, rebellions, changes without number. And still the image persists. A young president, pledged "to do better," riding in an open limousine, waving to cheering crowds. A turn, then another turn, and the car is heading past a tall building, slowly gliding toward the tunnel that lies just beyond a grassy knoll. The wife of the governor turns toward him and smiles. "You can't say the people of Dallas don't love you, Mr. President." There is no answer, only a sharp, popping

noise, a sound like firecrackers. In that moment everything changes.

The furies that were released with the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy have never gone away. Nor have the doubts that have surrounded the circumstances of his killing. The Warren Com-

The "dirty rumors" the Warren Commission tried to squash have not gone away. Now Watergate and new evidence have forced another look. The conclusion: a conspiracy for sure

mission's verdict that a "deranged" young man named Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, murdered President Kennedy and seriously wounded Governor John Connally, only to be killed himself two days later by another deranged, lone assassin named Jack Ruby, raised as many questions as it answered. Two years after the

publication of the commission's findings—a report and 26 volumes of documents and testimony, based on 25,000 interviews—the Gallup and Harris polls found that nearly two-thirds of the American people disbelieved its conclusions.

They were not the only doubters. Lyndon Johnson, who had appointed the commission, went to his grave believing that his predecessor had been the victim of a "communist" conspiracy. John Connally loudly proclaimed his objections to the commission's finding that he had been wounded by the same bullet that had allegedly passed through the President's throat. The commission's version of Connally's wounding was crucial, since, as one commission lawyer put it, "more shots means more assassins." Several members of the commission itself were less than convinced of the accuracy of the report they signed. Rep. Hale Boggs of Louisiana, a commission member, was particularly upset by many of the findings and wanted to issue a minority report, until the commission agreed to insert "probables" in front of many items that had been marked certainties. Even so, Boggs was less than satisfied. Until his mysterious disappearance in a light plane flying over Alaska in 1972, he continued to tell friends that the Warren Commission was in error. Similarly, the late Senator Richard Russell, who had been placed on the commission in deference to his power as chairman of the Armed Ser-

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With no investigative staff of its own, it relied on the FBI and CIA to do its field work for it. At times, the reliance proved embarrassing, as when the FBI report came in stating that President Kennedy and Governor Connally had been wounded by separate shots. The FBI version of the President's wounds also differed sharply from the commission's version, which later was condemned by the American Academy of Forensic Pathologists as being so incomplete and sloppy as to be no autopsy at all. The FBI's placement of the President's wounds—one in the head, another some six inches below the neck—made the commission's scenario of events untenable. Secret Service men who witnessed both the shooting and the autopsy also placed the back wound well below the neck, as did the autopsy doctors' own diagram. The President's jacket and shirt also showed a bullet hole just beneath the shoulder. Faced with such evidence, the commission chose the only practicable course: it ignored it.

Instead, the commission's junior lawyers came up with their own theory of the assassination, one contradicted by ballistics findings, autopsy results and the testimony of every witness to the actual event. In time, it came to be called "the magic bullet theory."

Simply stated, the commission found that three bullets were fired that day in Dealey Plaza, all from the rear. The final, fatal shot hit the President in the back of the head. The second shot missed completely and struck the pavement, wounding a bystander. The first, the "magic" bullet, struck President Kennedy in the back just below the neck, passed through his neck into the back of Governor Connally, smashed through Connally's rib and out his chest below his right nipple, and continued on to strike his wrist, finally winding up in Connally's thigh. In short, one shot, seven holes.

If there were only one assassin, firing from the sixth floor of the School Book Depository, the commission's the-

ory made sense. Indeed, it was the only theory that could account for a lone assassin, since the alleged murder weapon, a 1940 vintage Italian-made Mannlicher-Carcano, was a clumsy, single shot, difficult to operate weapon. Tests conducted by the commission determined that it was physically impossible to shoot and load the Carcano more than three times in the 5.6 seconds between the first time the President was hit and the final, fatal shot.

The trouble began when the commission attempted to duplicate Oswald's alleged marksmanship. First, they found that the rifle was fitted with a left-handed scope; Oswald was right-handed. Then, too, shims had to be inserted to make the scope accurate. Ignoring the fact that Oswald's Marine records showed him to be a

A petition backing a reinvestigation has collected more than 250,000 signatures on the West Coast alone

poor shot, the commission had three master marksmen from the National Rifle Association recreate the events in Dallas by hitting a level, stationary target. None of them could. Of course, Oswald could have been lucky. As for the one and a half seconds that elapse between the time the Zapruder film shows the President to be hit and Governor Connally bunching up and slumping over, the commission suggested that Connally was merely experiencing a "delayed reaction" to having his chest torn open by a high-powered rifle bullet.

Totally inexplicable is how the bullet that purportedly did all this damage (and was later conveniently discovered on the governor's stretcher in a corridor of Parkland Hospital) emerged so

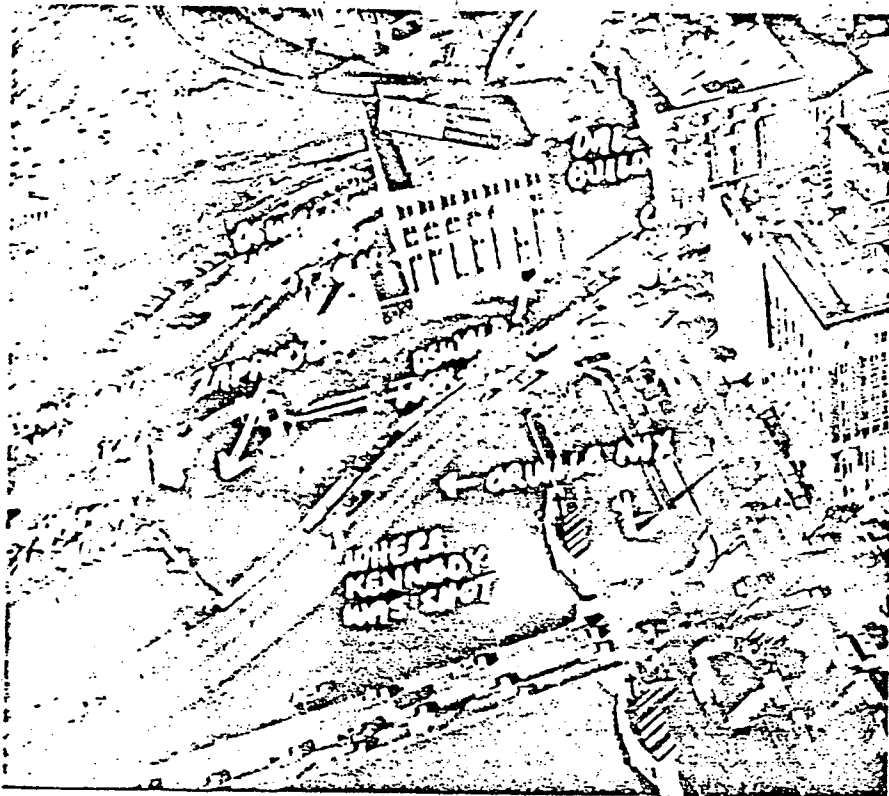
miraculously intact, virtually undeformed, with only 2.5 grains missing from its normal weight. The commission itself had a similar bullet fired into the wrist bone of a cadaver and found that the bullet was mangled.

The most damning evidence, though, comes from the most unlikely source: J. Edgar Hoover. In a letter to the commission not included in the original 26 volumes of evidence and testimony, Hoover reveals that the magic bullet and bullet fragments were subsequently subjected to spectrographic analysis. That test, Hoover reports, was inconclusive. However, there was an additional test, a Neutron Activation Analysis, a highly sophisticated technique that measures the differences in material that has been bombarded with radiation down to parts per billion and sometimes even less. In his letter to the commission, Hoover blandly reports that while "minor variations" were found between the fragments taken from President Kennedy's body and those taken from Governor Connally's body, those differences were not judged to be "sufficient." To the layman, that explanation sounds fine, and certainly the commission did not question it. But the beauty of NAA is that the size of differences between particles are meaningless. Virtually any difference, however minute, is not only "sufficient" but irrefutable. Unless atoms changed their structure that day in Dallas, John Kennedy and John Connally were wounded by separate bullets.

Perhaps the subtleties of neutrons and atoms may have escaped the members of the commission. Incredibly, no mention of the NAA test or Hoover's letter is to be found either in the report or the 26 volumes of evidence (so far, the FBI has refused to release copies of the actual NAA findings). Far more graphic evidence, however, was right in front of them: a color film of the assassination itself.

Abraham Zapruder, a Dallas dress

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Just as I did, he [the man at whom Smith had been pointing his weapon] showed me he was a Secret Service agent." There is only one problem. The Secret Service's own records show there were no Secret Service men on the grassy knoll.

Indeed, a lot of people were where they shouldn't have been that day. Winston Lawson, the Secret Service agent responsible for the choice of the Kennedy motorcade route, later reported that motorcycle outriders were posted on "the left and right flanks of the President's car" (a position that would have made a cross-fire more difficult). But, as the films of the motorcade clearly indicate, the motorcycles were posted well to the rear of the President's car and, according to the Dallas police, were positioned there at Lawson's own instructions. After the shooting, when the doors of the School Book Depository were sealed, a man was "trapped inside" who didn't belong there. He was James W. Powell, an Army intelligence agent.

Across the street from the Book Depository is the Dal-Tex Building, and assassination theorists have long speculated that some of the shots on the motorcade could have come from there as well as from the Book Depository. The cops evidently had the same idea, too, because, after the shooting, they picked up a young man who had been in the building "without a good excuse," as the police report puts it. Just who the young man was is impossible to say. While the records show he was taken to the sheriff's of-

fice, his name does not appear, nor does any alibi. Evidently, he just disappeared.

The debate over what did or did not go on at both the grassy knoll and the Dal-Tex Building might well be resolved by a thorough examination of the wounds in President Kennedy's brain. Just for this reason, the brain was removed after the autopsy and "set" in Formalin. Eventually, it was transported, along with other medical evidence, to the National Archives. When Dr. Cyril Wecht, the coroner of Allegheny County, Pa., and one of the few independent experts to examine the autopsy photographs and X-rays, sought to locate the brain at the archives, he made a grisly discovery. It, too, had disappeared.

The Oswald Connection

In fixing blame for the assassination, the commission ignored the testimony of eyewitnesses and settled instead on a 24-year-old former Marine named Lee Harvey Oswald. For a country still shaken by the Cold War, Oswald fit the bill perfectly. He was a self-proclaimed Marxist who had, several years before the assassination, "defected" to the Soviet Union. When he returned, he brought a Russian wife with him. As it happened, her uncle was an official in the Soviet Secret Police. Oswald had been born in New Orleans but had grown up in the Dallas area, and it was to Dallas that he returned. One month before the assassination, he had gone to work as a stockboy in the School Book Depository.

Oswald was arrested 75 minutes after the President's murder, as he was sitting in a movie theater. Eventually, he was charged with the murders of President Kennedy and J.D. Tippit, a Dallas police officer who was shot to death not many blocks from the theater within an hour of the assassination. The evidence that Oswald committed either crime is tenuous at best.

Physical evidence linking Oswald to the assassination was strangely inconclusive. A paraffin test turned up traces of nitrates on his hands but not on his cheek, and was ultimately dismissed by both the FBI and the commission as unreliable. A partial palm print was found on the weapon, but police were unable to prove it was Oswald's. The gun itself had been purchased through the mail by an A. Hidell. Dallas police claimed that they found Oswald carrying phony identification for an A. Hidell, yet the accompanying photograph does not look like Lee Harvey Oswald.

The day of the assassination, while rummaging through a garage where Oswald kept some of his things, the police also uncovered two snapshots of Oswald standing in a back yard, a revolver strapped around his hip. In one hand he holds some socialist propaganda literature. In the other he hefts a long, scope-mounted rifle. The FBI, however, was unable to determine whether the rifle was the Carcano. Other researchers, notably Sylvia Meagher, assert that the gun Oswald holds is 2.4 inches longer than the Carcano.

In any case, there is serious question whether the man holding the rifle is Lee Harvey Oswald at all. Several professional photo analysts have flatly branded the picture as a fake. They point out that the V-shaped shadow under the nose is identical in both photos, even though Oswald's head is tilted in one and erect in another. In the first photo Oswald is standing at an angle so oddly out of kilter that, in trying to duplicate it, one invariably falls over. Other photo analysis techniques, such as the red-blue transparency test, find a disparity in the skin tones of Oswald's head and those of his arm and hands. A comparison of the head in the photograph and Oswald's head in booking photos from the Dallas Police Department reveals that the Oswald arrested in Dallas had a rather narrow, pointed chin. The chin of the man standing in the back yard seems decidedly broad and squarish, leading critics of the Warren Commission to speculate that the back yard photo is of another man, with a cropped head shot of Lee Oswald laid atop it just above the chin. Finally,

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only plausible explanation is that Oswald reached Finland by noncommercial means. In the minds of the critics, the CIA made the means available.

Two weeks after his arrival in Russia, Oswald showed up at the American Embassy to make two startling declarations: he was renouncing his American citizenship, and he was going to turn over his knowledge of radar secrets to the Russians. The revelations did not seem to cause a ripple of concern. In any case, when Oswald applied for a new passport two years later, it was routinely granted, along with a loan of several hundred dollars to get home. At the time of Oswald's return to the United States—

1962—the CIA was questioning ordinary tourists about what they had seen in Russia. Oswald, the defector and self-proclaimed betrayer of military secrets, was merely met at the plane by Spas T. Raikin, whom the Warren Commission identified as an official of the Travellers Aid. What the commission did not note is that Mr. Raikin was the former secretary general of the American Friends of Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, a group with extensive ties to intelligence agencies in the Far East and Europe.

Back in Texas, Oswald and Marina were taken under the wing of Dallas's large and heavily CIA-infiltrated White Russian community. Few people extended more kindnesses to the Oswalds than George deMohrenshildt, a wealthy oil geologist who boasted that he had worked for French intelligence during the war. DeMohrenshildt took the Oswalds to parties and introduced the young unskilled worker and his bride to his circle of socially prominent friends. Quite possibly, deMohrenshildt also reminisced about the eight-month hiking trip he and his wife had recently taken in 1960 through Central America. Such tale-telling would not be unusual. According to the Warren Commission, deMohrenshildt had already filed a lengthy written and filmed report of his travels with "The U.S. Government." By "happencance," the commission writes, the deMohrenshildts' travel itinerary put them in Guatemala City (the jumping-off point for the invaders) at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Despite the aid of people like the deMohrenshildts, Oswald was apparently unable to get and keep steady work. At least, that was the stated reason why he moved to New Orleans in April of 1963. Oswald did not fare much better on the job market, but he did come in contact with some interesting people. One of them, according to nine witnesses including several law officers, was Clay Shaw. Although Shaw's participation in an assassination conspiracy has never been proven to anyone's satisfaction, Garrison did make a convincing case that Shaw was connected to the CIA, which would hardly be unusual since both New Orleans and the Trade Mart of which Shaw was director are centers of CIA activity in the Caribbean. Moreover, Victor Marchetti, the former executive assistant to CIA Director Richard Helms and author of *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, now quotes Helms as telling his senior staff people at the time of the Garrison trial that Shaw had been a "contract" employee of the agency.

It was in New Orleans that Oswald became involved with the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Once, while distributing FPCC leaflets, Oswald became involved in an altercation with anti-Castro activists. After a brief brawl, Oswald was arrested for disturbing the peace and hauled into a police station. He made one request: "I want to see the FBI." An agent quickly appeared, and Oswald was released the next day after paying a \$10 fine.

If it is unusual for a self-proclaimed "Marxist" to demand to see the FBI, it is no more out of character than Oswald's other labors on behalf of Castro's Cuba. Some of Oswald's leaflets, for instance, were stamped with the address "544 Camp Street." The commission could find no evidence that Oswald ever kept an office at that address, but in its search it found that an anti-Castro group had. That group was the Cuban Revolutionary Committee, a CIA creation put together by none other than E. Howard Hunt.

In late September 1963, Oswald left by bus from New Orleans to Mexico City, where he hoped to obtain a travel visa to Cuba. On October 10 the CIA sent a cable to the State Department and the Office of Naval Intelligence, informing them that a "reliable and sensitive source" had reported that Leon "Henry" Oswald had been seen entering the Soviet Embassy. The CIA said it had reason to believe that this was the same L.H. Oswald who lived in Texas and had once defected to the Soviet Union, and requested that State and ONI furnish pictures of Oswald so that the identity could be confirmed. In its cable the CIA describes Oswald as "approximately 35 years old, six feet tall, athletically built, with a receding hairline." Later, the CIA released pictures of the Mexico City "Oswald." The only resemblance between this "Oswald" and the Oswald arrested in Dallas a month later was the receding hairline. So far, the best explanation the CIA has offered for the affair is that it was a "mixup."

If it were truly a mixup, it bears some explanation. Oswald did, in fact, travel to Mexico City, and his name appears on a visa application filed with the Soviet Embassy. Confirmation comes both from embassy records and from one William G. Gaudet, whose name immediately follows Oswald's on the roster of Mexican travel permits. The Oswald-Gaudet sequence is another one of those coincidences that seemed to have dogged Lee Harvey Oswald throughout his life. For Mr. Gaudet, who lists his occupation as editor of the *Latin American Traveller*, is also an admitted former employee of the CIA.

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marksmen is especially interesting. First, Oswald did not drive. Second, on November 9, 1963, the day he was supposedly in a car dealership in Dallas, the commission puts him at home in Irving, Texas, writing a letter to the Soviet Embassy. There are other inconsistencies. On September 25, 1963, for instance, Oswald, according to the commission, was riding a bus to Mexico City. Yet, on the same day, a man calling himself Lee Harvey Oswald walked into the Selective Service Office in Austin, Texas, saying he wanted to discuss his dishonorable discharge.

In 1966 Richard Popkin, a college professor in St. Louis, concluded on the basis of these and other strange occurrences that there were two Oswalds, and that the phony Oswald had been employed to frame the real Lee Harvey Oswald. Popkin's thesis has a certain tidy logic to it. For one thing, it explains how Oswald could have been in two places at once. For another, it shows how a poor marksman could have hit a moving target at a range of 280 feet. For a third, it explains how Lee Harvey Oswald, a man who did not know how to drive, took a car for a test spin at speeds of up to 70 miles per hour.

The "two Oswald" theory also makes some sense out of the CIA's "mix-up" in Mexico City. Interestingly, a man identified as "Leon" Oswald, but fitting the description the CIA issued from Mexico City, showed up in the company of two other men at the home of Sylvia Odio, an anti-Castro Cuban living in Dallas, two months before the assassination. The men who passed themselves off as anti-Castroites said that it would be a good idea to have Kennedy assassinated. Two months later, when Sylvia Odio heard that a man named Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested for President Kennedy's assassination, she fainted.

Now, Peter Dale Scott, a professor at Berkeley, and one of the most respected and meticulous of the assassination theorists, has come up with a new

inkle on the Popkin thesis: not two Oswalds, but several.

Scott bases his conclusion on a study of Oswald photographs collected by the commission. The photograph on the passport Oswald used to enter the Soviet Union is especially striking. It surely shows somebody, but it does not appear to be Lee Harvey Oswald. The chin, facial, nose and bone structure all are wrong.

Scott has also collected the records of Oswald's physical examinations from the time he enlisted in the Marine Corps to the autopsy following his murder. They reveal some seemingly inexplicable dissimilarities. A Marine Corps medical examination conducted on October 24, 1956, for instance, found that Lee Harvey Oswald was 5' 8" tall, 135 pounds, with hazel eyes. Three years later, on September 11, 1959, another Marine exam puts him at 5' 11" tall, 150 pounds, with grey eyes. Of course, Oswald could have grown three inches, gained 15 pounds, and changed the color of his eyes in three years, but it seems unlikely. Altogether impossible is the change recorded on July 13, 1962, during a job physical Oswald took at Leslie Welding Co. That examination shows him to be 5' 9" tall—a loss of two inches in three years. In the arrest bulletin that went out for Oswald on November 22, he was described as 5' 10" tall and weighing 165 pounds—the description that is carried in the FBI files as well. At his autopsy, Oswald was found to be 5' 9" tall, 150 pounds, with grey-blue eyes.

One possible explanation for these differences is that there never was a real Lee Harvey Oswald, or, if there were, he died well before the first Lee Harvey Oswald entered the Marine Corps. From there on, the name and persona of Lee Harvey Oswald became an identity of convenience to be used by an intelligence agency or agencies unknown, a common enough practice among intelligence groups around the world.

Bizarre as the hydra-headed Oswald notion sounds, it was taken quite seriously by J. Edgar Hoover—two and a half years before the assassination. On June 3, 1960, Hoover sent a confidential memorandum to the Department of State, raising the possibility that an imposter might be using the credentials of Oswald, who was then living in the Soviet Union. The Hoover memo sparked other memos within the State Department. None of the correspondence on the possibility of an Oswald imposter was ever forwarded to the Warren Commission. Instead, it was buried in the National Archives and only uncovered recently. W.

Da Slawson, a lawyer who checked out rumors about Oswald for the Warren Commission, offers one explanation as to how the file on the counterfeit Oswald managed to disappear. "It conceivably could have been something related to the CIA," says Slawson. "I can only speculate now—but a general CIA effort to take out anything that reflected on them may have covered this up."

It is a chilling thesis, and, like so much about Dallas, it makes just enough sense not to be ruled out.

Who Done It?

There are no answers, of course, only theories, and they range from the unlikely to the obscene. There is a conspiracy to fit every taste and prejudice. The trouble is that, since Dallas, Vietnam and Watergate, few of them can be easily dismissed out of hand. For a time, the CIA itself considered the possibility that Os-

The agency and the mob have enjoyed a cozy relationship since World War II, when the Cosa Nostra protected U.S. ports from Axis sabotage

wald was some sort of "Manchurian Candidate," a sleeper assassin planted to go off on command. The theory, like all the others, made for interesting conversation around the watercoolers at Langley, but, if the CIA ever followed up on the notion, there is no evidence. Within the last few months, a novel, entitled *The Tears of Autumn*, has been published, putting forward the supposition that Kennedy was the victim of a revenge killing for the CIA-approved assassination of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem, who was slain in Saigon less than a month before Kennedy went to Dallas. One obvious problem with *The Tears of Autumn* plot is the timing. A few weeks' time seems hardly sufficient to concoct and execute as sophisticated a conspiracy as that which occurred November 22, 1963, in Dallas. Variations of "foreign agents did it" has long held considerable appeal for a number of Americans, including the unlikely duo of Lyndon Johnson and Jack Anderson, both of whom pointed the finger in the direction of Castro. Basically, the argument goes that Castro finally tired of the various U.S. attempts to rub

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essed in gambling: Havana, Cuba.

Cuba, crime and the CIA. The three things that everyone connected to the assassination has in common. The three things the Warren Commission did not want to hear about. They had their killer before the investigation started. If he lacked a motive, they would provide it. Oswald, according to the commission, killed Kennedy because of general feelings of inadequacy. At Gerald Ford's insistence, the commission added Oswald's being a communist as a reason for murder. Marina testified that it was all a terrible mistake, that Lee really wanted to kill Connally, missed, and shot Kennedy instead. The commission should have added that to the list as well. It makes just as much sense.

It is a confusing, disheartening, ultimately maddening business, this search for the killers of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The people who look are strange, obsessive types, as people should be who have worked in a grave so long. One man who did some of the earliest and best research into the assassination, and kept repeating that research endlessly, with no one listening, finally went mad with paranoia.

Fortunately, the disbelief is spreading. It is the little old ladies, not just the crazies, who are asking questions now. Where once the commission could count on the name and probity of its chairman to certify a preposterous scenario of events, today the mention of Earl Warren's commission brings laughter on college campuses. Ironically, the media have been the last to question the official version of events. The *New York Times*, which published its own edition of the Warren Commission report and a follow-up volume entitled *The Witnesses* (from which nearly all the dissenting testimony had been carefully excised), continues to stoutly defend the commission's report. Time Inc., which owns the original and hence clearest copy of the Zapruder film, keeps it locked away in a vault. On television the most comprehensive defense of the commission has come from four one-hour specials produced by CBS. The correspondent was that Watergate tiger, Dan Rather. It may be changing. With Watergate behind them, the investigative reporters are having a second look. As one assassination researcher puts it: "We are one Seymour Hersh story away from a new investigation."

America is different now than it was in 1963. Castro is a curiosity. The doubts don't need to be laid to rest. The "dirty rumors" have become all too true. What hasn't changed is the loss. We need to know why. ○

CIA Rumors Grow, Spark Doubts About JFK Death

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — A growing stain of suspicion that John F. Kennedy might have been the victim of a plot involving the Central Intelligence Agency has aroused President Ford's curiosity and stirred new excitement among advocates of the conspiracy theory.

"If I were a betting man," says trial lawyer Bernard J. Fensterwald, "I'd bet the full story will be known within a year."

"A year? I'm surprised at Fensterwald," said Dr. Richard Popkin, a philosophy professor at Washington University in St. Louis. "I'd make it six months."

Both men have noticed in recent months a growing web of unrelated disclosures, events and allegations which they believe will provoke the first serious re-examination of the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone as Kennedy's assassin in Dallas.

Ford, who was a commission member, also apparently noticed the resurgence of interest in the circumstances of Kennedy's death, particularly when the CIA was mentioned.

Some time in March, the White House said, Ford picked up the precise language of the Warren Commission's findings which he had helped write. So, when he got a surprise question about the matter April 3 at his San Diego, Calif., news conference, Ford was prepared.

He defended the commission's "very carefully drafted" statement that "we had found no evidence of a conspiracy, foreign or domestic." But he did not dismiss the possibility. "So far, I have seen no evidence that would dispute the conclusions to which we came," he said.

But "if the facts seem to justify it," Ford said, the Rockefeller Commission and the special House and Senate committees investigating CIA domestic activities might investigate.

Fensterwald, a dapper little Tennessean whose clients have included Watergate burglar James W. McCord Jr. and James Earl Ray said he believes something big is about to break in the Kennedy case.

"I have the same feeling I did about Watergate, the feeling the game was up," when McCord broke his silence with a letter to U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica charging high-level political pressures to cover up the scandal.

"There's just too much evidence around that the Warren Report is not correct, that the CIA and the FBI know a huge amount they didn't tell the Warren Commission," Fensterwald said.

But neither the Rockefeller Commission nor Congress seems to share his sense of urgency.

The executive director of the Rockefeller Commission, David Bellin, is a former Warren Commission counsel and staunch defender of the single-assassin argument. A spokesman said: "No evidence has been submitted to indicate any CIA involvement."

The Senate committee staff has acknowledged it will study the question, but only as a peripheral CIA issue.

Fensterwald believes the trigger for what Popkin called the "amazingly rapid buildup" of interest in the Kennedy case — the equivalent of a McCord letter — was disclosure of CIA involvement in assassination plots against several foreign heads of state, including Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, D-Tex., who has called for a new inquiry, says his suspicions were aroused by Watergate revelations of CIA activities and the Bay of Pigs.

Among other recent developments:

- Publication of the transcript of a previously secret Warren Commission meeting Jan. 27, 1964, obtained by free-lance investigator Harold Weisberg, in which former CIA Director Allen Dulles said it probably could never be determined independently whether Oswald was a CIA or FBI employee, which both agencies would deny.

- Two former aides of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, D-N.Y., said he told them in 1967 he had helped stop a CIA plot with the Mafia to kill Castro before the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. (The Cuban exile community has long speculated that Castro sought President Kennedy's assassination in retaliation for a planned attempt on his life.)

- Publication of two previously classified CIA photographs, taken in Mexico City six weeks before the assassination, of a "mystery man" who might have been trying to impersonate Oswald, who was trying to obtain visas from the Soviet and Cuban embassies about that time. (Fensterwald said two friends in intelligence separately identified the mystery man as a "mechanic," the CIA name for a hired killer.)

- Former CIA official George O'Toole said in a new book that a "psychological stress evaluator," an improved lie detector measuring the human voice, showed Oswald was telling the truth when he told reporters on tape after the assassination that "I didn't kill anybody."

- Unsuccessful but highly publicized court proceedings to obtain a new trial for Ray, whose lawyers claimed he was framed by unnamed conspirators in Martin Luther King's slaying, and to reopen the Robert Kennedy case on the ground the death bullet did not come from Sirhan B. Sirhan's gun.

Interviewed in his modernistic office in the Third Church of Christ Scientist Building overlooking Lafayette Park, Fensterwald said that after Watergate, "People will believe any-

thing — they're ready to believe E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis were in Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was shot."

Such irresponsible claims can serve to suppress the true story, said Fensterwald, whose private committee to investigate assassinations operates out of a small office a block away as a clearing-house for serious research.

"I don't think there was anybody out at Langley, Va., (CIA headquarters) who set up Kennedy," he said. "But like Watergate I think you've got two problems. Shooting the president is a lot more serious than breaking into Democratic headquarters, but covering up who is responsible for it is more serious."

Contrary to the Warren Report, Fensterwald says Oswald had ties with both the FBI and the CIA but raised grave U.S. doubts about his loyalty in his work with Cuba. "That's my best guess as to what was covered up," he said.

Fensterwald said the key figures will remain silent until some official body, perhaps in Congress, grants them immunity from prosecution and forces them to testify again under oath.

"Can you imagine what you could do with Marina (Oswald's Russian-born widow) in one morning if you put her under oath, and told her the first time you lie you're going to be on the first plane back to Moscow?" he asked.

Popkin, author of a book entitled "The Second Oswald," said in a telephone interview from St. Louis he suspects some of the CIA stories might have been inspired by the CIA itself, where Director William E. Colby is "cleaning house and reorganizing, and this is one way to get rid of some people."

One hypothesis, Popkin said, is that "they might need to solve the Kennedy case to get back into business." He foresees a time when the CIA "commits suicide in public, there will be confessions of wrongdoing Congress will ban all sorts of activities, and the CIA will be reconstructed in another form."

KGB is said to think CIA has sub, codes, missiles and leaked story

Washington (KNI)—Soviet intelligence agents privately are saying the CIA's effort to recover a sunken Soviet submarine from the Pacific last summer was a complete success.

There have been conflicting reports from sources here over just how much of the diesel-powered "Golf"-class submarine was pulled from 17,000 feet of water about 700 miles north of Hawaii.

Most reports say the Howard Hughes-developed salvage vessel, Glomar Explorer, hoisted only a third of the sub but missed the important code room and the nuclear-tipped

missiles. Mr. Hughes is the billionaire reclusive.

The Russians, who have not made any public comment about the CIA effort, privately have been very concerned about the new deep-sea capacity the United States has developed, it was said.

A high official of the KGB, the Soviet intelligence agency, told a regular contact recently that reports that the bodies of 70 Soviet seamen—most of the crew—had been brought up in only a third of the sub are not believable. He said he is convinced the entire sub was raised.

The Russians also were said to believe the CIA deliberately

leaked news of the salvage mission to take the minds of the American public off the agency's faltering image at home.

The CIA is being probed by two congressional committees and a special presidential commission. They are checking allegations the CIA, barred by its charter from domestic snooping, broke into the homes of Americans in the U.S. as well as wiretapped phones and opened mail.

CIA officials insist they did not leak word of the salvage mission. On the contrary, they say, William E. Colby, the director of central intelligence, tried to stop newspapers that already had the story from printing it.

Broker sues CIA for \$10 million

Miami (AP)—A former Miami mortgage broker, who claims the Central Intelligence Agency was behind his selling of counterfeit mortgages, sued the agency yesterday for \$10 million.

The suit, filed in federal court here, also names the federal government and Cuban exiles Guillermo Iglesias and Antonio Yglesias as defendants. The whereabouts of the two men, reported to have CIA connections, is unknown.

In the suit, broker Andres Castro blamed the CIA for the failure of his mortgage business; for causing threats and personal danger to him, and for alleged humiliation and ridicule.

Mr. Castro claimed the two men persuaded him in 1973 to let them use his company as a front to raise money for covert CIA activities. The CIA declined comment on the suit.

Probe official backs Warren Commission

Washington (NYT)—The Rockefeller Commission investigating the Central Intelligence Agency has received "no credible evidence" that the CIA had any involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy or that Lee Harvey Oswald was not, as the Warren Commission found, the lone assassin, the panel's executive director said yesterday.

The assertion by David W. Belin was a departure from the commission's policy of not commenting on its investigations.

Mr. Belin said he had chosen

to speak out because of a comment by President Ford in San Diego Thursday and several press reports that might lead to speculation that there was substantive new evidence of CIA involvement or a conspiracy plot in the murder of Kennedy Nov. 22, 1963.

Mr. Belin said the commission, under its charter from President Ford, had an obligation to investigate every allegation of illegal domestic activity by the CIA and that an allegation that the agency was involved in Kennedy's death was clearly in that area. It was in this regard that the commission took evidence from a group

headed by Dick Gregory, the comedian, regarding an assertion that E. Howard Hunt, Jr., a figure in the Watergate case, had been seized near the Kennedy assassination site within minutes of the shooting in Dallas.

Mr. Gregory submitted to the commission photos purporting to show that Hunt and Frank Sturgis, another figure in the Watergate case, were picked up by Dallas police and jailed. Hunt denied the allegation in testimony before the commission.

Mr. Belin declined to catalog all the evidence regarding Mr. Gregory's allegations but said that the commission would continue to accept any evidence that might be brought forth. He said, however, that nothing so far had weakened the Warren Commission conclusions.

At his press conference Thursday, Mr. Ford, who was a member of the Warren Commission as a congressman, said that he had seen no evidence that would contradict the War-

ren report, although he went on to note that the Rockefeller Commission was investigating it.

Mr. Belin, who served as counsel to the Warren Commission, later wrote a book, entitled "You Are The Jury," which detailed how the commission had reached its conclusion. He said that after he completes his present assignment on the Rockefeller Commission, he hopes to be able to discuss the Kennedy assassination allegations more fully.

Panel Aide Comments

No CIA Link To Killing Found

New York Times News Service

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WASHINGTON STAR
8 APRIL 1975

Rockefeller Panels Checking JFK Angle

Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller has confirmed that the White House commission investigating illegal domestic activities of the CIA is trying to find out if the agency had any connection with the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy.

But Rockefeller told reporters after the 13th session of the blue ribbon commission, which he heads, that there is no thought of re-examining the assassination.

Rockefeller explained that the commission mandate required it to investigate any illegal operations

of the CIA, and he said that would include both overseas assassinations and the Kennedy case if evidence is discovered that there was any CIA knowledge or participation.

Rockefeller indicated the commission has no evidence contrary to the findings of the Warren Commission, which concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald was acting alone when he fatally wounded the president in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

HOWEVER, there are reports that the commission is questioning former CIA personnel about knowledge the

agency had of Oswald, an ex-Marine who lived for some time in the Soviet Union and therefore would have been regarded by intelligence agencies as a defector.

It is also known that CIA operatives in Mexico were aware of Oswald's movements there prior to the assassination when he went to both the Cuban and Soviet Embassies in an attempt to obtain permission to enter those countries.

Rockefeller was pressed closely on the assassination aspect of its investigation and insisted the mandate of the commission was un-

changed. He explained that any domestic activity of the CIA, presumably including discussions, plans or files would come within scope of the query whether the assassinations took place overseas or domestically or even if they were never successfully carried out.

YESTERDAY'S leading witness at the closed-door hearing of the commission was McGeorge Bundy, national security adviser from 1961 to 1966 to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and now president of the Ford Foundation.

While Bundy was in charge of national security and intelligence matters at the White House, a number of reported plots, possibly involving the CIA, were discussed, involving Gen. Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, President Francois Duvalier of Haiti and Prime Minister Fidel Castro of Cuba. Trujillo was assassinated in 1961 and Duvalier died of natural causes several years ago.

Bundy refused to discuss his testimony with reporters after the hearing. But he did declare he was not aware of any serious assassination talk while he was national security adviser to the White House.

Oswald-Agent Contact Covered Up

By Jack Anderson
and Les Whitten

The late J. Edgar Hoover, in his zeal to protect his beloved FBI, engineered a cover-up 12 years ago to keep the Warren Commission from learning about the ties between FBI agent James Hosty and assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

The formidable Hoover, whose bulldog visage had become a national symbol of law and order, intervened personally when the Warren Commission began to zero in on Hosty.

Now, 12 years later, Hosty has admitted destroying a threatening note, which Oswald delivered to the FBI office in Dallas a few days before shooting President John F. Kennedy in November, 1963. The note threatened to blow up the FBI office and Dallas police headquarters if Hosty didn't stop bothering his wife.

The FBI should have notified the Secret Service that Oswald, a misfit who had threatened violence, was in the Dallas area. The Secret Service routinely would have checked his whereabouts during the presidential visit. This might have saved President Kennedy's life.

When the FBI learned that a suspect named Lee Harvey Oswald had been picked up, Hosty reminded his boss, Gordon Shanklin, that he had

been handling the Oswald case. Shanklin telephoned the Dallas police and asked whether Hosty could participate in the interrogation.

Hosty later questioned Oswald at police headquarters. Oswald, who had been outwardly calm, suddenly became agitated. "I know you!" he shouted. "I know you! You're the one who accosted my wife twice!"

The incident passed, however, without any mention of the threatening letter. Hosty also confided to a friend on the Dallas police force, Lt. Jack Revill, that the FBI had a file on Oswald. Revill repeated the conversation to a superior who ordered him to put it in writing.

Special Agent Hosty related to this officer, Revill wrote, that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was aware of the subject (Oswald) and that they had information that this subject was capable of committing the assassination of President Kennedy.

Hoover was furious when he learned of Hosty's loose talk. According to confidential notes taken at the time, the grizzled FBI chief complained that Hosty had "diarrhea of words." But the old man, nevertheless, sought to cover up the FBI's embarrassment.

On Dec. 23, 1963, the FBI gave the Warren Commission a

summary of Oswald's notebook. The summary conveniently omitted the fact that Hosty's name, telephone and license tag had been in the notebook.

The commission found out about the omission and demanded an explanation. On Jan. 27, 1964, Hoover acknowledged that Hosty's name had been in the notebook.

The G-man also gave what purported to be a full account of the FBI's contacts with Oswald. The last contact, he reported, had been on Aug. 10, 1963. "We did not interview Oswald in Dallas, Texas, or in Irving, Texas, prior to the assassination of President Kennedy," Hoover added.

Interestingly, he used the word "our" to describe the last contact with the FBI. But on Feb. 6, in a sworn affidavit, Hoover changed the wording in a curious way. He swore that Oswald had no contact with FBI "agents" after Aug. 10, 1963.

It is now known, of course, that Oswald appeared at the FBI office in Dallas a few days before the assassination. At that time, just as Hoover said, he did not speak with any FBI agents. But he spoke with an FBI receptionist, who passed on his threatening note to the agents.

It is impossible to know whether the late FBI chief subtly switched the word "our" to "agents" in order to hide his knowledge of Oswald's violent threat.

But in a later letter to the Warren Commission, dated April 6, 1964, Hoover stated categorically: "I wish to emphasize that the facts available to the FBI concerning Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the assassination did not indicate in any way that he was or would be a threat to President Kennedy."

The truth is, of course, that the FBI had received dramatic evidence less than a week before the assassination that Oswald was violence-prone.

On April 24, the Dallas Morning News reported Hosty had told the Dallas police lieutenant, Jack Revill, that the FBI knew Oswald was "capable" of assassinating the President. Hoover immediately sent word to the Warren Commission that the story was "false" and followed up three days later with a personal letter delivered by courier.

Special Agent Hosty unequivocally denies ever having made the statement as quoted in this article. He declared the FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, pointed out that prior to the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, he never had any information indicating potential violence on the part of Lee Harvey Oswald.

There's more to Hoover's great cover-up, which we'll report in a future column.

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The JFK Case: ... The Demons Are All in Our Minds

By Jacob Cohen

How can one explain the extraordinary degree of political distrust and, beyond that, the pervasive taste for mystery and conspiracy which is everywhere so conspicuous in America today? Old conspiracy theories concerning Alger Hiss, the Rosen-

Jacob Cohen, a member of the American Studies Department at Brandeis University, teaches a course on "The Idea of Conspiracy." That theme is the basis for his forthcoming book, *The Limits of Distrust, examining allegations of government conspiracy made in connection with several famous cases in American history.*

This article is adapted, by permission, from a longer version published in the October 1975 issue of *Commentary* magazine. © 1975 by Commentary.

bergs, and the assassination of President Kennedy, are out of the dustbin and enjoying new life, there seem to be more than enough readers for five different treatments of that laugh-

Living with these slight ambiguities should not prove an impossible burden for a citizen to carry through life as compared with the manifest impossibilities demanded by the critics' version of the shooting.

able non-mystery, the Bermuda Triangle, the flying saucer faithful are riding high, and a new species of high-class monster movie (*The Conversation*, *Chinatown*, *Night Moves*, *The Parallax View*) ends with the monster alive and still menacing.

The message in these movies seems to be that we are surrounded by unconquerably complex and sinister forces; withdrawal and resignation are offered as appropriate responses.

The customary explanation is that recent revelations concerning Watergate, Vietnam, the CIA and FBI, et al., have caused and, perhaps, justify the present mood of distrust, and that truthfulness and rectitude on high will one day dispel it. However, close examination of the cultural scene reveals that this is only part of the explanation and perhaps not the most important part. I believe we are deal-

materials and the reports of nine doctors who have seen the X-rays and photographs of President Kennedy. Cohen argues that the Warren Commission findings have been completely reviewed and confirmed.)

It is impossible to soothe every doubt generated by this veritable religion of suspicion, but let me try to deal with two lines of argument which for some indicate there must be fire behind all the smoke. One concerns the timing of the shot which struck Gov. Connally, and the other concerns the famous bullet, exhibit 399.

By now all agree that the single-assassin theory requires that one bullet strike Kennedy high in the back, exit from his throat, and then hit Gov. Connally, causing all of his five wounds and broken bones: (1) an entry wound in the back near the right armpit, (2) a shattered fifth rib and an exit wound below the right nipple and 25 degrees below the back wound, (3) an entry wound on the knuckle side of the right wrist about two inches up from the wrist joint, and a broken wrist bone, (4) an exit wound on the palm side three-fourths of an inch above the wrist crease.

Of an inch above the wrist crease, and an exit wound below the right nipple and 25 degrees below the back wound, (3) an entry wound on the knuckle side of the right wrist about two inches up from the wrist joint, and a broken wrist bone, (4) an exit wound on the palm side three-fourths of an inch above the wrist crease.

high about 5 inches above the knee.

Connally was seated on the jump seat directly in front and slightly to the left of Kennedy; it is difficult to see how a bullet exiting from the president's throat could miss him (which is one reason the first-generation critics strove so mightily to keep that bullet from coming through). If the bullet did miss Connally, it could not have missed the interior of the open car, and the absence of any damage to the car caused by a high-speed bullet barely slowed by its passage through the president's neck argues strongly that the bullet struck Connally. The car was (5) thoroughly examined by the FBI as it was driven to the hospital.

within 48 hours of the assassination, one doubts that the FBI covered up evidence of bullet damage, not because that agency is incapable of fibbing but because the FBI could not have known what lies to tell that early. It seems logical to conclude that the bullet struck Connally in the back and precisely in the place he was actually hit.

The ambiguity fastened on by the critics arises because the famous Zapruder film of the motorcade seems to show Connally being hit well after Kennedy but too soon after to allow for the possibility that he was struck by a second shot from the back. See *DISTRUST, H4*

Why Do They Hide From the Evidence?

By Jerry Polcoff and Howard Rothman

Jacob Cohen laces his slick defense of the discredited Warren Report with broadside attacks at the honest

lower wound is accurate). Secondly, bullet paths are unpredictable, and it is much more likely that the bullet would have flown free of the car than that it would have hit Connally where he was hit, then proceeded to do so much further damage.

Mr. Cohen slights all the dispositive evidence negating the single-bul-

YOU'RE FIRED!



STRIKE

OPPHANT

Sunday, October 26, 1975

DISTRUST

Continued from H-1

same rifle. During frames 207-225 of the film, which was running at 18.3 frames a second, Kennedy is out of view, blocked by a sign. As he re-emerges to view in frame 225, it is clear that he has already been hit: both hands are clutching at his throat (which, according to the critics, has not yet been wounded). However, Connally's reaction is not dramatically visible until frame 237, perhaps a second after Kennedy was struck. Prof. Josiah Thompson, whose book *Six Seconds in Dallas* deserves a graphics award, has dwelled lovingly on that and the ensuing three frames, directing the reader's attention to the sudden slump of Connally's right shoulder between frames 237-238 and the puff in his left cheek. Connally himself, reviewing the films frame by frame, thought he was hit somewhere between 231-234. He does not remember ever being aware of wounds to his wrists and thigh. Both men, let it be stressed, were hit from above and behind, not from the knoll. The question is, was it by one or two assass-

Delayed reactions to a bullet hit are not uncommon; by dwelling on the Zapruder film frame by frame the critics distort the time values in the case. If, as to me seems obvious, Connally was struck by the same bullet as Kennedy, a reaction a second later does not present a major challenge to the credibility of the commission's reconstruction of the shooting. But there is one set of facts in the case — apart from the fact that the bullet which exited from Kennedy's throat could not have missed beyond honest doubt that they were hit by the same bullet, and that has to do with Gov. Connally's wrist. No critic has ever disputed these basic facts or interpretations of fact: (1) that the wound of entry in Connally's wrist was on the knuckle (dorsal) side $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches further up the arm than the exit wound on the palm (volar) side; (2) that the bullet which struck Connally's wrist had already struck something else, blunting its impact; (3) that Connally had a shallow puncture wound in his left thigh caused by a large missile whose force was almost dissipated by the time it struck. As Howard Roffman, a third-generation critic who has shaken down and shaped up a decade of criticism, puts it in his book: "It is probable that one bullet caused all of Connally's injuries."

A careful perusal of the Zapruder film reveals that in frame 225, as Kennedy reemerges into view from behind the sign, Connally's torso is turned slightly to the right and his head is turned far to the right, per-

All of which brings us finally to the famous "magic bullet," as it has been dubbed by the critics, exhibit 399 which, in my view, presents the only serious challenge to the Warren Commission's case, how serious, the reader can judge.

The bullet was found on the ground floor of the Parkland Hospital in Dallas, within an hour of the shooting, by Darrell C. Tomlinson, the hospital's senior engineer. Kennedy and Connally had been taken on stretchers to two different emergency rooms. The president remained on his stretcher until he was declared dead, but the governor was immediately transferred to an operating table. Whereupon, a nurse, Jane C. Webster, rolled the bloody sheets on his stretcher into a small bundle, an orderly, R. J. Jimison, placed it on an elevator, and Tomlinson removed the stretcher from the elevator, where it had been for perhaps 10 minutes, and placed it in a corridor on the ground floor of the hospital alongside another stretcher unconnected with the care of either man. Somewhat later, Tomlinson shoved one of the stretchers against the wall and a bullet rolled out. He is not sure from which of the two stretchers. The bullet he found was a 6.5 millimeter, copper-jacketed, Mannlicher

utter recklessness of men who are respected as the most responsible critics of the Warren Commission and the tolerance for recklessness which has developed in this country in the last decade. The critics don't care to reconstruct a singular reality, preferring a strategy of pure attack, from contradictory points of view. Testifying before the Rockefeller Commission, Dr. Cyril Wecht, a professor at the Duquesne University School of Law and chief medical examiner of Allegheny County, Pa., has the audacity to argue that the fact that Connally still held his hat in frame 237 proves that he hasn't been struck in the wrist yet, when Wecht must know that if Connally had not yet been struck in the wrist, then he again be in a position to receive its wounds from any plausible source. I know of no critical work on the assassination which even acknowledges Connally's wrist as a problem for an alternative version of the shooting. And not because these writers are unaware of the problem; no one who has lived with these movable jigsaw puzzle parts as long as they have can fail to know exactly where the parts refuse to fit together. Professors are taught in graduate school that a complete critical argument must include frank acknowledgment of the difficulties in one's position, a rhetorical figure known as prolepsis, and one which I am obviously fond of. Scholarship which avoids facing the obvious problems carries the scent of dishonesty.

always follow the laws of maximum probability. Strange things happen, though never impossible things, and accounts of strange happenings must sound strange. However, if accept-
struck Connally implicates one in an improbability of a high order, consideration of what happened.

Clearly, exhibit 399 had to have been played by the real conspirators. No other conclusion is possible. Let us try to imagine how that might have happened. Immediately after the shooting news comes to Conspiracy Central, that the president has been taken to the Parkland Hospital, a messenger is sent over to the hospital with a spare bullet fired from Oswald's gun, missing a little lead from the base, though not more than was found in the body. He drops it somewhere next to Connally's stretcher, as it happens. One wonders did he inquire where it was? Connally's stretcher? (And why not Kennedy's while he was at it?) Months later, it becomes clear that the bullet fired neatly into a single assassin's theory. All this effort, recall, is part of a massive scheme to hide the existence of a conspiracy from the authorities when obviously the chances at the time were overwhelming that a bullet from Oswald's gun dropped randomly and irrationally in the hospital would point directly at the existence of other conspirators. Also this version necessitates that the bullet which really hit Connally's resting finally in the flesh of his left thigh, is missing or was intentionally hidden, and if hidden, hidden before anyone could have known that would be necessary. All official parties to the deceit, of course, have remained silent for more than 12 years. Readers

ple have heard bate raging and passionate and formed a disse something. After smoke there is f this case is only battle, a green, must not at all li which arise from alarming is that capable of dete because its sense come to include i government wro

Actually, the Kennedy case. Whole portions must be discarded (Dallas) for in truth, moment (apparently) p count for nothin who worked clos in preparing his nearly three yea tions of it must b less gossip, and s



Reality happens only one way, but that one way does not always follow the laws of maximum probability. Strange things happen, and accounts of strange happenings must sound strange.

haps executing the look backward the governor vividly recalls making after the first shot. His right arm is over his lap, the wrist over the left thigh; his right hand, knuckles up, is grasping a wide-brimmed hat. At that point, a split second after Kennedy was hit, he is in perfect alignment to receive all his wounds. Assuming he was in something like this posture a moment before, that would be the only moment when the double hit was plausible; but then that is the only moment when the Warren Commis-

Carcano, almost perfectly formed save for a slight distortion in its lead base. It weighed 158.6 grains, about 2.5 less than the average bullet of its type, apparently the result of its lead missing from its base. Ballistic tests performed in the next 24 hours established that that bullet had been fired from the rifle, Oswald's, which was found miles away in the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository. The last of Connally's wounds was a shallow puncture of the left thigh, caused by a large missile whose

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By frame 230, however, before the critics say he was struck, Connally has begun to turn to his right; he has raised his right hand, which is still clutching the hat; his knuckles are just above and facing his right shoulder, his elbow is at his side. All during the 230s, as he continues his turn to the right, Connally's knuckles are at least shoulder high, his elbow at his side. By frame 240, slightly more than a second after Kennedy was struck, he has turned 90 degrees to the right and is facing out the side of the car. A bullet striking Connally when the critics say he was hit then would have had to exit from the chest at a downward angle; to have taken at least two sharp turns upward, in midair — right and then left into the knuckle side of the wrist; and then, upon exiting on the palm side, further up in the air than the wound of entry, would have had to execute a very sharp U-turn into the thigh (also to avoid hitting the hat, which would have been struck if the bullet came straight out the palm side); plainly impossible. Indeed in order for a gunman to have wounded Connally in the wrist during those frames, he would have to have been firing from the floor of the car. But no gunman was noticed there.

To affirm the commission's version of the shooting, then, one need only live with the possibility that the governor accurately remembers his own thoughts and reactions at the time but that his reactions were slightly delayed. His failure to remember ever being hit in the wrist or thigh confirms that he is not the best witness to what happened, however well he remembers what he thought happened. As for the sudden slump of the right shoulder and the puff in the left cheek, they are clearly there in frames 237-238, but viewed in the context of the moving film are part of an earlier motion commencing in frame 230, when Connally begins a rapid turn to the right which is completed a little more than half a second later in frame 240. Living with these slight ambiguities should not prove an impossible burden for a citizen to carry through life as compared with the manifest impossibilities demanded by the critics' version of the shooting.

But significantly, the critics have no difficulty with the impossibilities of their own theories. One of the reasons I have dwelled on this matter in such detail is to demonstrate the one way, but that one way does not

Carcano, almost perfectly formed save for a slight distortion in its lead base. It weighed 158.6 grains, about 2.5 less than the average bullet of its type, apparently the result of the tests performed in the next 24 hours established that that bullet had been fired from the rifle, Oswald's, which was found miles away in the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository. The last of Connally's wounds was a shallow puncture of the left thigh, caused by a large missile whose energy was almost entirely expended. Since no other large missile was recovered which could be related to Connally's wounds, and this one was found in conjunction with Connally's stretcher, the Warren Commission concluded that it was the bullet which had caused all of Connally's wounds after having passed unobstructed through Kennedy's neck.

Through the years the critics took several lines of attack on the bullet. For a while, they tried to associate it with Kennedy's stretcher, implying it was the bullet which hit Kennedy in the back and worked itself out. That proved unproductive as it became clear that the bullet which struck Kennedy in the back did not work itself out, and furthermore, that Kennedy's stretcher was nowhere near the place where the bullet was recovered. Then the critics tried to argue that the metallic fragments recovered from Connally, plus those remaining in him and Kennedy, exceeded the amount of metal missing from the bullet, which if true would leave the commission's case in a shambles. But that too failed to pan out: the weight of the bullet is no longer considered a problem for the years, there were heated demands that the FBI release its spectrographic analysis of the bullet, which the metal recovered from the bodies was copper and/or from a different bullet. The recent release of that report should stymie this line of investigation, momentarily.

Still, a problem remains and it is a considerable one. Save for a slight distortion in the base, the bullet is nearly pristine. How, the critics ask, could a bullet which caused seven wounds and shattered two bones, Connally's rib and wrist, have emerged so unscathed? The Warren Commission never conducted tests to ascertain the plausibility of the bullet's shape, but other tests on bullet velocity, left test bullets considerably more distorted than exhibit 399. Several experts testifying before the commission were clearly shaken by the bullet's pristine shape and unruined copper surface, and the commission's own account of the bullet shows the strain of advocacy. A fair summary of the expert testimony on the bullet is that its shape is improbable, highly improbable to some, but not impossible.

Reality, I have said, happens only one way, but that one way does not

and a bullet rolled out. He is not sure from which of the two stretchers. The bullet he found was a 6.5 millimeter, copper-jacketed, Mannlicher

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I submit that anyone, like Dr. Wecht, who has seen speculation after speculation about the assassination refuted, and continues to proclaim his vast distrust of the Warren Commission's conclusions, while hanging from this narrow thread, is receiving inspiration from a source outside this world and its evidences.

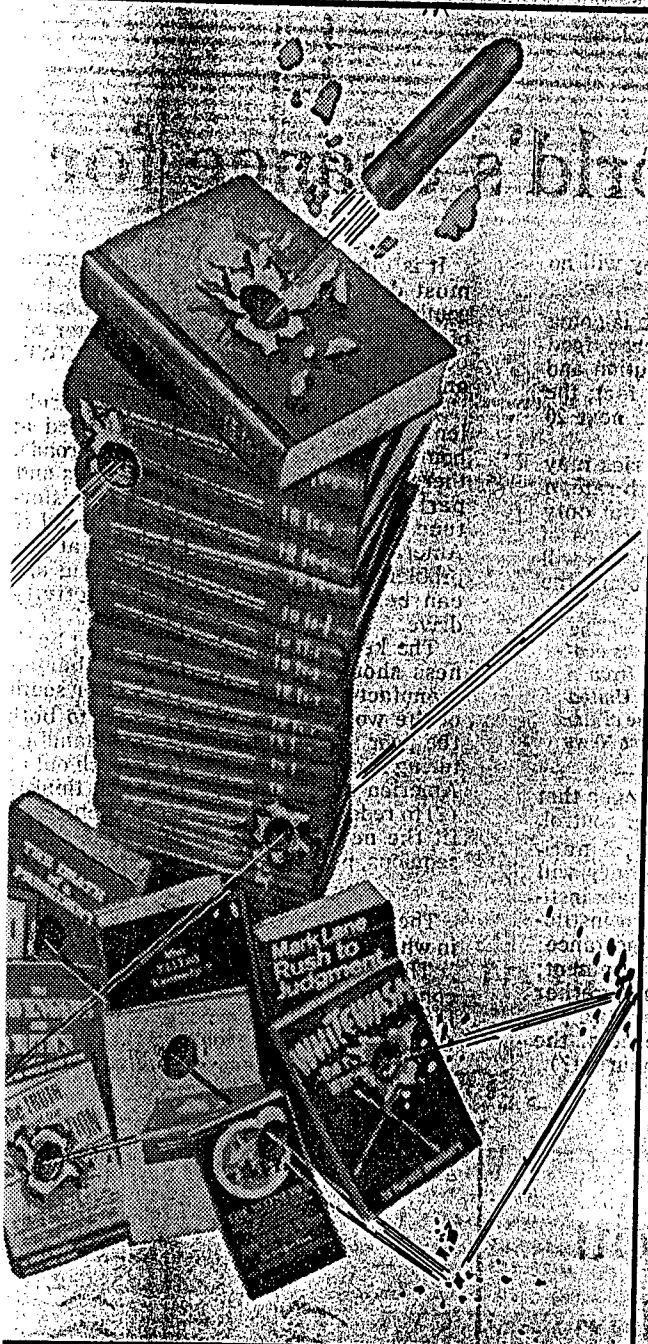
One frequently hears the opinion that if there is nothing fishy about the assassination, then at least the Warren Commission was seriously culpable in not forestalling the enormous controversy which the report has provoked. But I think careful study of the history of the controversy would show that there is nothing the commission could have done to silence the more extreme critics or discourage the media and the public's tolerance for their antic accusations. Not to mention: Chief Justice Warren should have forced the Kennedy family to release the photographs and X-rays to the commission, and even today one wishes to press the Kennedy family to provide an explanation of why President Kennedy's brain, removed by the autopsy doctors for laboratory examination, was not sent to the national archives along with the other autopsy materials.

But to argue that these and other errors provoked the controversy is to commit the fallacy *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. In analyzing the specific debate, as we have done, the clear port rested on demonstrational assumptions which notational arguments could have forestalled. The lawyers on the commission could not have imagined that a kind of critical methodology by which events are usually reconstructed would be used.

The public, for its part, can only be a spectator to all this, as Walter Lippmann said long ago in *The Phantom Public*. It never judges the issues on their merits, having neither the time, inclination, opportunity, nor ability — but rather forms its conclusions from the sound and style of the debate and its brute sense of the plausible. When the Gallup poll finds, as it has consistently since late 1966, that two-thirds and more of the American public doubt the essential conclusions of the Warren Commission, that only means that many peo-

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dent of the assassination. One recalls no public concessions of error.

Indeed, in the spate of articles now appearing in the wake of Watergate, one hears the same ground gone over again and again. Mark Lane is back on the college lecture circuit rehashing old mischief, most of which has even been discarded by other critics. A writer like George O'Toole, whose fanciful book, *The Assassination Tapes*, has received a big play in the sex magazines, rehearses lines of argument which he admits are far-fetched, as if to say: any event which can generate such heated comment, even plainly absurd comment, can't be completely clean. And here is the staid old *Saturday Evening Post*, September 1975, with a Norman Rockwell portrait of Kennedy on the cover, and within, sandwiched between the familiar homespun nostalgia, a section on the "unsolved murder mystery," featuring decade-old speculation about the back and neck wound and pictures of the leading critics of the Warren Commission: the new culture heroes.

Hannah Arendt has written that the opposite of a fact is a lie. There will come a time when many of the writers and lecturers who have gained celebrity by raising doubts about the assassination will be known for what they occasionally were: conscious liars. But in explaining the grip these writers have on audiences and readers (and editors), one must invoke a public psychology quite familiar to the historian of witch crazes and other paranoid enthusiasms in which even proven fantasies retain lingering reputation. When it comes to the Kennedy assassination or some other cases, normally rational people display the sweet madness of the flying-saucer freak or the Bermuda Triangle buff who makes no efforts to hide his assumption that palpably mistaken identification of a flying object or ocean mishap is an identification of some sort which retains status as evidence.

Characteristically, the assassination critic will move swiftly from one critical riff to another, never pausing long enough to permit reader or listener to test the validity of each separate provocation. Over the past ten years one has seen one after another of these riffs dissolve as completely as must any speculation about the Kennedy head and back wounds, for instance, though that has not dissuaded cunning writers and orators from rearranging them in new improvisations.

Thus the photograph of Oswald, rifle in hand, is not a fabrication, but a picture taken on his camera by his wife seven months before the Kennedy assassination — the shadow under Oswald's nose notwithstanding. Any jury in the world, expect perhaps one made up of assassination critics, would have found Oswald guilty of shooting officer Tippit, which is not to say that the defense attorney in the case would have been at a loss for words. The picture of two derelicts arrested after the shooting does not reveal the faces of Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis: the derelict Hunt is shorter, older, and fatter than the real one; the derelict Sturgis much taller and lighter than his alleged look-alike. And the several photo-

graphs allegedly showing another gun or gunman have, after years of most intense scrutiny, one by one, proved to be mirages.

It is usually the case in public discourse that revelations of major errors invalidate the accompanying case. When the graduate student admits faking test results, the professor is expected to denounce the conclusions resting on those results. With the assassination very different rules of discourse seem to prevail: as soon as a new line of speculation appears and remains temporarily unfuted, all the rest take on new life. Reviewing Mark Lane's *Rush to Judgment* (1967) soon after it appeared, Norman Mailer, who has often claimed he is able to recapitulate the deepest currents and emotions of the times, wrote, in the *Village Voice*, that if just one-tenth of what Mark Lane was charging was true, there was serious mischief afoot in the land. A less contemporary judgment would hold that if nine-tenths of what Lane said was nonsense, the chances of the rest containing much sense are very slim.

All of which does not mean that there were no Watergate or CIA revelations, no lying in connection with Vietnam. Nor are the bureaucratic, political and plainly immoral tendencies associated with those events absent from the government's handling of the assassination or some other cases. There is already evidence, for example, that the FBI, fearing that the agency would be blamed for not providing better protection for the president, hid evidence that it knew of Oswald's violent tendencies before the shooting. Nor is some future revelation that Oswald worked in some capacity for the CIA or FBI precluded, though that would not in itself tie those agencies to a plot to kill the president. I would guess that HUAC and the Justice Department's pursuit and prosecution of Hiss and the Rosenbergs were often unscrupulous and excessive, as documents now being released in those cases will probably show.

Obviously such wrongdoing cannot be blinked at; indeed, a little paranoia is probably healthy in keeping the scoundrels in line. However, the evil forces conjured by the assassination critics and their like are of an entirely different order. In their hands the system is simply unrecognizable. Among the lessons of Watergate, after all, is that in a free society it is very hard to hide conspiracies for very long, even conspiracies which, in the case of Watergate, are considerably more modest than those implied by the assassination critics. But to those critics the government is capable of anything. We are beset by demons. The delirium and confusion they tend to provoke turns citizens into metaphysical spectators ill-equipped for the hard, realistic vigilance which is necessary to preserve liberty.

Of course, there is no Civil Liberties Union to protect our institutions from slander and rampant paranoia. And I am not calling for an inquisition. I just wish more people, everyone, would shake their fingers at these cranks and say: "For shame!"

laws of maximum ge things happen, possible things, and e happenings must 0ver, if accept- as the bullet which plicates one in an high order, consid- s of the critics' ver- ned.

t 399 had to have, he real conspira- clusion is possible, ine how that might immediately after comes to Conspira- the president has Parkland Hospital, it over to the hospi- let fired from Os- g a little lead from, ot more than was. He drops it some- nally's stretcher, e wonders did he e is. Connally is why not Kennedy's 2) Months later, it at, this bullet fits le assassin theory, eally is part of a

hide the existence, om the authorities, ie chances at the- lming that a bullet y dropped random- y in the hospital- y at the existence rs. Also this ver- that the bullet Connally, resting of his left thigh is entionally hidden, for before anyone

ple have heard an ill-mannered de- bate raging and concluded that such passionate and apparently well-in- formed dissent must signify something. After all, where there is smoke there is fire. But the smoke in this case is only the smoke of verbal battle, a green, chemically produced mist not at all like the black billows which arise from real flames. What is alarming is that the public seems in- capable of detecting the difference because its sense of the plausible has come to include incredible charges of government wrong-doing.

Actually, the speculations in the Kennedy case are utterly illusory. Whole portions of respected books must be discarded as worthless (one thinks of Thompson's *Six Seconds in Dallas*) for in matters of factual truth, momentary ingenuity, and (apparently) passionate sincerity count for nothing. Prof. Thompson, who worked closely with Dr. Wecht in preparing his book, has known for nearly three years that major por- tions of it must be discarded as base- less gossip, and so too has every stu-

